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LALLIE CHARLES.

THE DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH.

Titchfield Road, N. W.



THE Journal for all interested in

Country Life and Country Pursuits

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CO-OPERATION . . .
IN IRELAND.

POLITICIANS might advantageously devote some time to a careful study of the means by which the condition of the Irish peasant has been ameliorated. During the last half-century and more he has had many loud and obtrusive friends. A great part of the legislative time and energy of that period has been employed in devising measures for his assistance. But all the clamour and all the Acts of Parliament have produced little effect. In the days when Mr. Gladstone listened to the chapel bell and brought measures into the House of Commons that generated strife and bitterness and divided parties more deeply than they had been before, it was thought by many that Parliament would be the saving agency. The late Mr. Parnell and his confederates based their hopes, as far as these hopes were genuine, on the establishment of a new House of Commons in College Green. But the raving of partisans and the bringing in of Bills was really futile. What has improved the condition of the Irish was the step taken by Sir Horace Plunkett fifteen years ago, when, with the aid of Mr. Anderson and some others, he succeeded in establishing a system of co-operation in which the small Irishry might join. In reviewing the effects he produced it will be well to keep strictly in view the materials he had to work on. Ireland had long been known as a very poor nation, and the class it was desired to benefit was the poorest section of it. Pat, with his laughing face, his wretched hut or cottage (in which he shared accommodation with the pig), his small Kerry cow, and his patch of barren soil, was poverty incarnate. That under such circumstances he should be able to earn a name for wit and good-humour was one of those phenomena that make us proud of the infinite capacity for endurance in human nature. But the

position did not tend towards the development of those qualities, such as thrift, economy, and hatred of debt, which produce a comfortable and prosperous citizen. On the contrary, he was as thoughtless and as thriftless as only the very rich and the very poor can afford to be.

To help the peasant, of which this is a fair description, did not at first sight seem to be at all easy. He had enemies within himself as well as difficulties without. Among the most formidable of the former was the habit of uncleanness which had grown upon him. The poor Irishmen who came over here harvesting before the days of the reaper and binder, were not, to put it mildly, bedfellows that the English labourer cared for, and in the home dirt and vermin made the place unholy. Now, we recount these circumstances by no means in the way of reproach, but as showing the difficulty that had to be overcome. It was a very practical difficulty indeed. One of the oldest men in the London butter trade, and one who has had probably the longest and largest experience of any man living, told the writer that the first butter that came over from Ireland was inexpressible. He frankly confessed, at the same time, that he regarded any attempt to place Irish butter on the English market as futile in the extreme. In those days it had the lowest quotation of any that was sent into England. But anyone taking up a newspaper of to-day will find, if he can read it aright, an extraordinary tribute to the training which Sir Horace Plunkett has taught the Irishman to give himself. There is to-day no finer butter sold in London than that which comes from the Irish creameries. It is fine in flavour, beautifully packed, and as scrupulously clean as the most particular dairymaid could wish. The sale of butter represents to these peasant farmers a sum of over two millions a year; but that fact does not appeal to us so strongly as this other, that the butter has been raised from the bottom of the ladder to the top of it, and Sir Horace Plunkett would be entitled to the gratitude of the nation even if he had no other claim than this. At the same time, a certain moderation should be exercised in drawing conclusions from it. The word farmer is in itself somewhat misleading. In England it applies to a tenant of perhaps a thousand acres, who is able to keep a carriage and live as well as the smaller landlords. In Ireland it applies to a class poorer than our agricultural labourers, whose bit of a holding could in England be worked in a labourer's spare time. This was a help rather than a hindrance to combination, these small men not having the jealousies which prevail among the large farmers on the English estate.

Sir Horace Plunkett did not confine his efforts to the establishment of creameries and the promotion of co-operative principles, but he has helped to rid the rural districts of other pests. The money-lender has always been an insidious foe to the Irish peasant. His usury has greatly helped to keep his victims in their original state of poverty, and, of course, an impecunious man is in the worst possible position for buying. He is obliged to obtain credit, and the consequence is that not only has he to pay the top price, but he has no guarantee of the quality of his purchases. Out of this difficulty he has been helped by the agricultural societies. With their aid he can borrow to the full extent of his securities at a reasonable rate of interest. It is for his benefit that he has to declare the object of the loan, and that the sureties are obliged to see that he devotes the money to the specific purpose for which it is granted him. In this way he has got the better of the professional money-lender. But by co-operating in buying he secures a still further benefit. A powerful society can go to a seller and demand the lowest possible price, since they are in a position to purchase in large quantities, and while they guarantee payment they also demand guarantees of the quality of the goods supplied, be they seed potatoes or corn and grass seeds or machinery. This side of co-operation has been most highly appreciated in Great Britain, and during the last few years several influential societies have been formed for the purchase of manures, feeding-stuffs, and seeds, and it is found they work very well. We are inclined to think, however, that the moral effect on the Irishman is even more important than the material, since everything goes to show him that cleanliness and care and thrift are qualities which in this world meet with a prompt and solid reward. We are therefore inclined to place a much higher value upon the work of Sir Horace Plunkett than upon that of all the statesmen and "patriots" who have wailed over the woes of Erin.

Our Portrait Illustration.

OUR frontispiece this week is a portrait of the Duchess of Marlborough. Consuelo, daughter of William Kissam Vanderbilt, Esq., of New York, was married in 1895 to the ninth Duke of Marlborough, who in Mr. Balfour's reconstructed Cabinet is Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies.



MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN is not a man to be envied at the present moment. He has put off the evil day as long as he can, but on Tuesday next he will have to make his Budget proposals, and a more unpleasant task never devolved on a Chancellor of the Exchequer. At this moment this nation in comparison with its commercial prosperity is overtaxed, and yet he must find the means wherewith to meet a deficit which is not likely to fall short of £5,000,000 if we take into account the expenses of the expedition to Thibet. At the time we write the rumour has become current that he will resort to the old device of adding to the income-tax, but we certainly think this will be unpopular, as it certainly is unfair. The number of individuals assessed for income-tax in this country is only 355,374. Of these, only 81,450 pay on more than £1,000 a year, while the average income of the huge remainder is only £226. A professional man earning from £200 to £400 a year feels the income-tax as a very great burden, which necessitates his economising in some other direction, and it is little short of intolerable that for every exigency this small section, which has been very truly called the brains of the nation, should be mulcted of the wherewith.

At the same time, everyone who studies the conditions must sympathise with the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his difficulty. What may be called the amateur suggestions as to the new tax are of the wildest and feeblest description; at least, we have not seen any proposal made that, in our opinion, has the slightest chance of passing the House of Commons, and Mr. Austen Chamberlain will have to face a great array of criticism. It is a melancholy fact that two of the greatest financiers of our time will probably make their last Budget speech on this occasion. Sir William Harcourt feels the weight of age so much that he is going to resign his constituency, and Sir Michael Hicks-Beach has followed his example. Both of these financial authorities have been in the habit of consulting one another, although they happened to be on opposite sides of the House, and perhaps the wisest thing Mr. Austen Chamberlain could do would be to call them into council. A question of this kind need not necessarily be one of party. The whole country is concerned, and would support any statesman who brought forward a just and equitable proposal; but we think they would rebel if the income-tax, and nothing but the income-tax, were resorted to, and the Government would add very much to its already great unpopularity.

The signature of the Anglo-French agreement continues to be a fruitful subject of discussion among those interested in foreign politics, and, indeed, the more it is studied the more remarkable does it appear. It seems only yesterday since the French were vilipending the late Queen Victoria, and in our Parliament rebukes were administered that rang with an air of defiance. It seemed then that nothing but a deadly quarrel could be the outcome of such relations. The question now is how the change has come about, and two theories are put forward. One is that when King Edward came to the throne his strongest resolution was that there should be peace in his time, and he constantly urged Ministers to work with that object in view. As far as France went he undoubtedly had the co-operation of President Loubet, and it may willingly be admitted that the gracious personal offices of King and President have been a potent influence in bringing about an alliance between the two nations. Yet few will accept the explanation as absolutely satisfactory.

A second theory—and it is certainly the more philosophic of the two—is that the drawing together of France and Great Britain is part of a tremendous rearrangement of the Powers of the earth that is taking place owing to the operation of natural and inevitable laws. The alliance between France and Russia was one of one-sided advantage, and could not be expected to last; while for Russia, and perhaps for the rest of the world, the

Far East has suddenly become the centre of interest. We do not mean interest exactly in the way in which one speaks of the feelings excited by a battle or a series of battles, but rather that the Far East has suddenly sprung into the greatest importance. It is not only the theatre of war, but obviously the source from which a great deal of the commerce of the future will come; and the occurrences there have brought the United States into Asiatic, and even European, politics to an extent which we cannot as yet fully measure. Thus, as it were, the old state of affairs, as far as all these countries are concerned, has been flung into the melting-pot, and probably—few will go so far as to state it positively—the statesmen have been right in getting up an alliance between France and England as a preliminary step in the reconstitution of the world's forces.

But the Power that seems to be stranded for the moment is Germany, and we would like to know how far Germany was in the minds of the Cabinet at St. James's and that of Paris when working out the idea of this new treaty. Under the sway of Prince Bismarck German policy was directed to keep England and France at loggerheads, and undoubtedly Bismarck made clever use of Egypt to effect this purpose. That was unnatural, because it is to the best interest of France that we should flourish and be her friend; just as it is to our best interest that France should flourish and be our friend; but the combination may easily be regarded as hostile by Germany, which, for once in a way, is being left out in the cold. It is extremely unlikely that the Ministers of the Kaiser will ever learn to work amicably with those of the Czar, and a Russian alliance scarcely seems possible for Germany at the present moment, while no other would be of importance. The commercial interests of the United States conflict with hers, and it would almost appear as though English statesmen were looking forward to a time when there will be serious danger of a rupture with Germany. Perhaps it is imprudent to dwell on the fact, but no one who makes himself acquainted with opinion in Germany and in England can fail to see that the two nations are developing that opposition of sentiment and aspiration which is too often the prelude of war.

AN ECHO.

When all the year is young and apple-bloom
Is rose and white upon the orchard tree,
When all the threads of Spring's ethereal loom
Weave a green garment for her phantasy;
That voice of youth and growth and vanished years
Comes through all time in floating cadence still,
Through life and change and long-forgotten tears,
The cuckoo calling faintly from the hill.

The hidden streams in many a marshy place
Their chains of little standing pools unfold,
Like silver mirrors for Spring's wanton face,
Tossed at her feet and framed in marigold.
Hark to her footsteps down the sloping fields,
Dancing in measure to the music shrill,
That, from its budding heart, the coppice yields,
The cuckoo calling faintly from the hill.

O Youth, O Spring, O change, O haunting note!
When from our life we shed mortality,
When all its troublous passions are remote,
All that the ear can hear or eye can see;
Mayhap, across the gulf where Time lies bound,
Some shadow of a voice may reach us still
Like that long echo from enchanted ground,
The cuckoo calling faintly from the hill.

JANE COX.

News from the seat of war filters through but slowly, thanks to a censorship which has no precedent, but one or two salient facts emerge. Unlike many other battles, the first important engagement fought by the Japanese has gained in importance with the lapse of time. All that we hear goes to deepen the seriousness of the blow to Russia, and to show that Japan has fully established her position as mistress of the Far Eastern seas. In the next place, it is fairly evident that the Russians have had to evacuate Korea. That probably was the second point in the objective of the Japs, and their success is gratifying. All the same, the retreat of the Russians is tactical rather than the consequence of a repulse. As soon as their fleet was irretrievably damaged, it was necessary for them in their state of unpreparedness to fall back within secure lines until opportunity had been afforded to bring up the reserves, and, of course, the further they can entice the Japanese away from their base the more equal the conditions are.

In the *Monthly Review* for April there is a very elaborate analysis of Russia's financial staying power by Maurice A. Gerotwohl. After going through the official statements, he comes to the conclusion that if Russia sends 400,000 men to the

front, with periodic drafts to fill up gaps, the cost would be from £40,000,000 to £45,000,000 a year. If this be so, he calculates that Russia would be able to carry on a war for over eighteen months without seeking an additional loan. He does not think she will wait so long, because, of course, she would borrow under unfavourable circumstances. On the other hand, if any striking or brilliant success were to come her way, then money could be obtained on much easier terms. The writer holds that the financial situation of the Government is undoubtedly strong in itself, but it has been largely fortified not with the acquiescence, but, to a certain degree, at the expense, of the country. What we gather from the article, which is an exceptionally well-informed one, is that Russia is possibly strong enough to pull through her difficulties, but that if she succeeds it will be by casting away many of the forms of government and traditions that have long been obsolete in nearly every other European country, but which still survive as an anomaly in the dominions of the Czar.

Lord Kitchener has issued an important order which shows that he has been spending his time to good effect in India. At the same time, it is a warning that ought not to be neglected. Lord Kitchener thinks that military authorities have been forming quite false estimates of their ability to cope with any enemy likely to be encountered, and advises that they should adopt a system of training suited to the vastly changed conditions of the day and calculated to eliminate obsolete traditions. He says in a wholesale manner that "all ranks require increased knowledge and improved martial qualities." He condemns the present distribution of troops and commands which have grown up without plan or method. It is a very thorough-going criticism of our Indian defensive arrangements, but the consolation is that Lord Kitchener himself is on the spot. We can only hope that the Government will give him full power to carry out whatever changes he may think desirable. India at the present time is the most vulnerable part of the Empire, and, to quote an old proverb, no chain is stronger than its weakest link.

A SONG IN THE NIGHT.

Sleep, thou darling baby thing!
I will hold thee close and sing
Songs of innocence undefiled,
Good for the soul of a little child.
Then sleep, sleep thou darling thing,
And may God bless thy waking!

Sleep, thou darling baby thing!
See, thine Angel's sheltering wing
Stretches wide across thy brow,
Lest aught of evil hurt thee now.
Then sleep, sleep thou darling thing,
And may God bless thy waking!

Sleep, thou darling baby thing!
Blackbird Night is on the wing,
And through a mist of trembling grey
Stir the swift pinions of the Day.
Then sleep, sleep thou darling thing,
And may God bless thy waking!

DOROTHY FRANCES GURNEY.

Whatever we may think of the Salvation Army, it will generally be admitted that their work has been productive of good in the submerged tenth where they have operated mostly. There will, therefore, be a disposition to welcome General Booth's new scheme of dealing with the outcasts of society. He has been to Australia and Canada and South Africa, and looked upon the wide areas of land there that seem to cry out for someone to come and till them, and so add to the food resources of the world. Now on the Continent several nations have tried within their own territories to found labour colonies to which a similar class is drafted. We do not think such a scheme would work well in England, because it would take a number of people closely allied to the criminal classes into our comparatively small country districts, and pollute our rural population. Besides, despite the outcry about the cheapening of land, there is really very little to be had except at a high price. But we form the great Colonial Empire of the world, and there is no reason why the great regions of land which await development should not be made the homes of those who are permanently unemployed in England. Mr. Booth has got hold of a great scheme, and it is satisfactory to know that the Home Government, the Government of Canada, and that of Australia are willing to co-operate in a substantial manner. General Booth says that he hopes to get £50,000 from the Home Government, £50,000 from Canada, and £50,000 from each of the colonies of Australia and Africa. That would afford a good foundation on which to build, and all who have studied this problem will wish good luck to his endeavours.

One of the most serious documents ever issued by a Colonial Government is the Report of the Royal Commission on the decline of the New South Wales birth-rate. The bare facts are singularly alarming. "Since 1899 there has been a very marked fall in the birth-rate, and between 1889 and 1902 the decrease was no less than ten births per thousand." The Commission, after having gone carefully into the causes of the decline, give three reasons for it. One is the deliberate limitation of families, the second is the personal selfishness which finds expression in "the desire of the individual to avoid his obligations to the community," and the third is "the decay of religious feeling." The effects are summarised in these words, "defective health, defective morals, and defective character are already manifesting themselves as a warning of a more marked deterioration likely to ensue." Comment upon this is unnecessary. If the vice here indicated should spread, the end of the British Colonial Empire is not far distant.

In connection with this report should be read the article on the United States of America which Dr. Emil Reich contributes to the April number of the *National Review*. He describes "the breakdown of American maternity" as a cloud threatening the future of America, and not long ago President Roosevelt told his countrywomen this in the plainest terms. "Statistics reveal," says Dr. Reich, "that the United States can in no wise depend for its future prosperity upon the offspring of its own women." Further on he remarks that "many a State has been brought to ruin by its women." Certainly the peril never was greater than at the present moment, when the individual woman has almost ceased to recognise that she owes anything to the community. In the history of great States, from the Fall of the Roman Empire onwards, that invariably has been the sign of national decadence.

This is the season of the year when woodland and other fires occur most freely. The herbage that has withered in winter, having been dried by the March winds, now ignites like tinder. All who are interested in English fauna will read with regret that one of the first to occur was that at Wicken Fen. Nearly 130 acres of the sedge have been destroyed, and the sedge itself is said to reach the value of about £500. But that is the least of the matter. Entomologists and other students of natural history have long prized Wicken Fen as a district where plants, chrysalides, insects, and birds not surviving anywhere else in England could be found, and, of course, they are utterly destroyed by the fire. The owners threaten to close the fen in future to entomologists and botanists, and though we would greatly regret it, it is difficult to blame them. The fire seems to have occurred through someone carelessly throwing a lighted vesta into the sedge, and if visitors utterly neglect the interests of the owners of land to which they are admitted, they have no reason to complain of exclusion.

Who controls Policeman X is a question concerning which many interesting letters have been written to the *Times* within the last week or ten days. Policeman X is, on the whole, a very popular individual. In London especially he is the most obliging of men, and the way he controls the traffic, holds unruly busmen and cabdrivers in awe, and gives directions to the strayed reveller are the admiration of all visitors. But being human he is at times liable to err, and it is not outside the range of experience for him to get the wrong man into trouble, and the question is, how can he be brought to book? One of the correspondents referred to quoted the case of two soldiers who were out on legitimate business with leave, but had forgotten to take a written permission with them, whereupon Policeman X pounced upon them and promptly "ran them in." This was given as a flagrant example of tyranny. But a county constable has come to the defence. Section 154 of the Army Act, Sub-section (1) says: "Upon reasonable suspicion that a person is a deserter it shall be lawful for any constable to apprehend such suspected person and forthwith to bring him before a court of summary jurisdiction." This is giving fairly large power to Policeman X, and perhaps justifies him in this particular case, but still that does not solve the difficulty, which is, who is responsible for him if he does go wrong?

The East Sussex County Council is to be congratulated on its enterprise in instituting experimental fruit farms, with the purpose of providing the local farmers with object-lessons that may help them in competing with foreign fruit-growers and withstanding the results of bad seasons. Frant, Groombridge, and other villages on the Kentish border of Sussex are spoken of as the sites of the farms, which are intended to be of no more than a quarter of an acre each in area. These are very modest dimensions, but no doubt the details have been well considered. A special expert will be put in charge of the farms to ensure their best possible management. There is no part of England in which the soil and climate are more favourable for fruit-

growing than East Sussex. Intelligent management is all that is required to bring the fruit crops up to the highest standard; but something further is needed—namely, reasonable rates of railway transport—to enable the farmer to put his fruit on the market at a fair price when he has grown it. This also is a point that calls for the attention of the authorities.

A subject of some interest and not wholly impertinent conjecture is the probable destination of the nearly unique collection of pictures of the Barbizon school belonging to the late Mr. J. S. Forbes. Mr. Forbes, with Mr. Ionides and Sir John Day, was among the earliest of the picture-lovers in this country to appreciate the beauty of the rendering of country life given by the French artists who established themselves at Barbizon—Corot, Millet, Rousseau, and the rest. In comparatively early life the late Mr. Forbes's railway work took him to Holland, and it is likely enough that the lessons of Art and Nature in that artistic land disposed him to a true love of the true beauty and pathos of simple scenes which is the note of the Barbizon painters' work. In Nature, no less than in Art,

Mr. Forbes was an ardent lover of the country, and as a relaxation from his severe mental labour in railway management, he delighted in betaking himself to the recesses of the New Forest and the like beautiful and restful places of England.

Primroses, as a general rule, are somewhat past their best by the date of what is called Primrose Day, but this year April 19th will see them just about at their prime. Their numbers have seldom been greater, and although the best of their bloom is belated, by a week or two, there has not been a day all through the winter when a primrose or two might not be found in the sheltered copses of the southern counties, such as Kent and Sussex. Farmers in those counties have great hopes that the cherry crop of this season will make up in some measure for its practically total failure last year. Although the bloom is backward there is abundance of bud: the very fact that there was no fruit last season means that the trees had a rest which should have stored them with vigorous life; and the late development of the bloom is some guarantee that the spring frosts will not catch the forming fruit.

ROOKS AND ROOKERIES.

THIS is the time of the year when the "clanging rookery" is at its noisiest and busiest. Late in winter the birds performed their strange courtship. It often happens, if the season be mild, that in January the male rook begins to develop that hoarseness which is a sign of the breeding season's approach. On sunny days, while the menace of snow still hangs over the earth, the birds begin to gather about the old nests, and carry sticks to them. It is then that the great fights take place between the males, several of whom strive to mate with one hen, a fact which would seem to show that even in this form of life individual attractiveness counts for something. They fight very fiercely, and may frequently be seen beginning to spar and buffet one another at the top of the tree, and, as the conflict goes on, gradually descending till they come to the very ground. In some parts of the country ruthless farmers, who consider that the birds have increased to a dangerous extent, take advantage of the boldness which comes during courtship to shoot them. It is a question that has been much debated, whether the rook is or is not injurious to crops. There can be no doubt whatever that in ordinary circumstances he eats a great number of grubs, but, on the other hand, we fear that the most partial judge will not be able to exonerate him from robbing the seed and harvest fields. There are times of the year and seasons when the rook is subject to something very nearly approaching starvation, the worst periods for him being



T. Kitching.

"BOSOMED HIGH IN TUFTED TREES."

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the dead of winter when the ground is frost-bound or covered with snow, and the middle of a very dry summer. During winter he is almost forced into thieving, and if the rooks are

once able to get through the thatch of a cornrick, the holes they will make in it and the quantity of grain they will carry away are almost incredible. At that time, too, he goes in the root fields, and with his strong bill will often pierce the turnips. In this case the grievance of the farmer is great indeed, because the rook does far more mischief than is measured by the mere amount of his theft. If a turnip is once broken it succumbs at once to frost and the whole root is lost. Not infrequently a large field has been practically destroyed by the black marauders of whom Hogg, the Ettrick shepherd, wrote, "they should be written in the Devil's book in round hand." Moreover, owing to the vast increase in the number of rooks, they have had to adopt habits of feeding different from those of their ancestors. They have become pronounced egg-stealers, or, rather, individuals have caught the vice, for if anyone will take the trouble to watch the rooks bringing food to their nests when the young have been hatched, they will see that



C. Reid, Wishaw, N.B.

HUNGRY ROOKS.

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C. Reid, Wishaw, N.B.

SITTING OUT.

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each family has its own favourite dish. When a rook has once acquired a taste for eggs, it never seems to lose it, and is indefatigable in hunting for them. A rookery that we know almost overhangs a farmyard, the owner of which has been so much accustomed to their cawing that he will not permit them to be shot. Yet the poultry-woman hates them, for they continually hang about, and if a hen, as hens will, ventures to lay an egg in an exposed situation, at the foot of the haystack, for instance, the rooks are almost certain to get it. On one occasion, indeed, we saw an ancient rook make off with the earthenware nest-egg that had been placed to encourage Dame Partlet to lay. He carried it safely to his nest, but we imagine that his dark progeny must have grown weary of trying to break the shell. In the open field an old rook will quarter the ground as carefully as a pointer in search of the eggs of such birds as lay out there. In the early part of the season, before there is much cover, game birds, especially the partridge and the pheasant, are greatly exposed to these depredations, and on many estates the gamekeeper can scarcely be restrained from shooting the rook at sight.

Probably not many people have noticed how miserable the rook is during a long droughty summer. There are often no

modified their voices or obtained them altogether from the sound of rippling or breaking waves, so the rook has become



C. Reid, Wishaw, N.B.

A GRAVE CONSULTATION.

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attuned to the voice of the wind as it plays through the plantation. At least, we think so, but it may be a matter of

association only. The writer remembers on one occasion when he was staying at a country house that the rooks kept up such an incessant cawing one night that the maid of one of the lady guests became perfectly ill from sleeplessness. She had before that lived at Brighton, and was soothed to slumber every night by the rattle of omnibuses and cabs, but the noise of the rooks seemed to her a most unnatural one, and had a highly disturbing effect upon her nerves. If the writer had not been present he would scarcely have believed it, because of a theory he once held that all truly natural sounds are, if not positively soothing, at least in no way detrimental to human susceptibilities. The sea, for instance, save at those times when it is raging and tempestuous, croons a lullaby that might well put the weariest to sleep, and anything more tranquil than the breathing of wind through summer foliage is not imaginable. Yet people who have lived long in towns, and have therefore got out of touch with Nature, would not accept this. In the country



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BEFORE THE LEAVES COME.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

they are roused at the most unearthly hours by the crowing of chanticleer, the quacking of ducks and gabble of geese, the lowing of cows, the singing of birds, and other similar noises that rise from the neighbourhood of a farm in time of spring.

Perhaps the finest rookeries in England are those which go by the name of denes—dene, we take it, being practically the same word as den or dell. In the one we know best the earth seems cleft in two by a tiny stream that dances over a cascade at the top and flows down the middle, sometimes rippling over pebbles or gravel, at other times sinking out of sight in a mass of dead leaves. By



C. Reid.

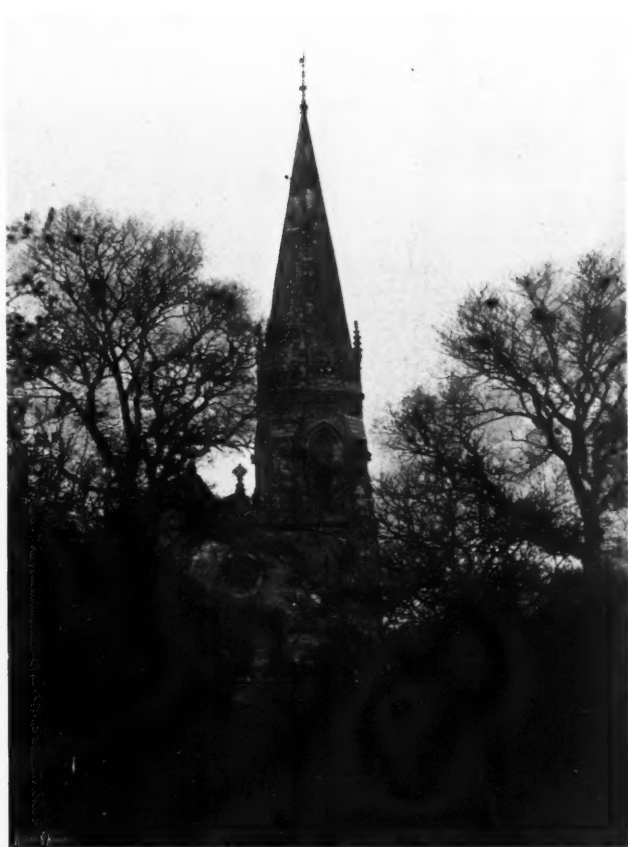
A SUMMER ROOKERY.

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the side of this watercourse the tree-roots have all been uncovered by the winter floods, and form splendid crevices for all sorts of birds to build in. So much is this the case that our memory of early birds'-nesting is indelibly associated with the cawing of the rooks, whose nests were high up, in the tall beech trees. Just below the cascade the water-ouzel had a home for his white eggs, and robins, wrens, thrushes, blackbirds, all found a good building site among the bare exposed roots by the sides of the narrow channel.

On a laburnum that stood at the edge of the dene a sparrowhawk bred for many years. The chaffinch placed his mossy home on the edge of the old beeches, and the tits found crevices not much larger than one's finger, into which they popped with bits of hair in their mouths.

It was very dark even in mid-day in the centre of the dene, under the heavy-foliaged beeches, and perhaps that was the reason why the brown owls were so often to be seen floating under the



T. Kitching.

THE CHURCH ROOKERY.

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boughs. They seem to be a very delicate people, the owls, for often a dead one was picked up by the margin of the brook. "Everie night and alle" they were heard too-whooping as they ranged the fields for prey.

A BOOK OF THE WEEK.

IN the "English Men of Letters" series it has not so far been the custom to have writers dealt with by their contemporaries, but an exception has been made in the case of Mr. Benson's *Rossetti* (Macmillan). It somewhat modifies the plan of the series. The preceding volumes have been less biographical than critical, but if we consider the authorities to whom Mr. Benson has referred we shall see that a critical estimate was out of the question. He went to Rossetti's brother, W. M. Rossetti, who would be more than human if he could impartially judge the value of Gabriel's work. Again, Mr. Watts Dunton is a very able and accomplished critic, but he was a very near and dear friend to Rossetti while

the latter lived—indeed, he was chosen to be the poet's biographer, and to expect anything in the nature of a balanced and judicial estimate from him would be most unreasonable. Mr. Fairfax Murray was also a friend of the poet, so was Mr. Hall Caine, who, before he became notorious as a popular novelist, acted in the capacity of Rossetti's secretary. A similar objection applies to Mr. Edmund Gosse and Mr. M. H. Spielmann. They all knew Rossetti personally, and small blame



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AS SEEN FROM BELOW.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

to them if they succumbed more or less to the force of his dominant personality. But the aim of the writer of the Rossetti volume in the "English Men of Letters," if we apprehend Mr. John Morley's original idea of it correctly, should not have been to produce an intimate biography, but rather to give an appreciation likely to prove enduring. Now, Rossetti's fame while he lived might very fairly be called esoteric, that is to say, he was held in the very highest esteem by the members of a select tea-party. As head of the pre-Raphaelite movement he held in public estimation a position of mysterious glamour, but since his death time has played havoc with many old impressions incidental to the man's life and character, and shown that his name may possibly be, after all, only "writ in water." It, at any rate, is no longer one to conjure with. We speak of him chiefly as a man of letters, but what is said would probably hold good of him as a painter also. In selection of subject he was too monotonous, in execution too mannered, to have a place among the great painters. If, on the other hand, we consider him purely as a poet, it is evident that the lapse of time has told against his reputation. The ballads for which he was most famous are now truly regarded as being more or less "fakes"—in them he attempted the impossible. The one poem that stands out among his work is "The Blessed Damozel." There is something that is, as it were, provincial even in this the best of his poems, and many were merely addressed to a coterie. They have taken no strong or genuine hold on the public.

Rossetti's life is one that bears out this judgment. He was of foreign origin, and, as Mr. Benson is careful to say over and over again, he never became in any real sense an Englishman. The most dramatic feature of his early life was his engagement and marriage to Miss Siddal. It seems to have been very far from a pleasant or agreeable union. Miss Siddal was a wonderful woman for her class, but she had not the width of view or the education that would have fitted her to have been a real companion to the poet. He himself undoubtedly felt this. His infidelities are hinted at by Mr. Benson, but, as a matter of fact, they were notorious in the circle to which Rossetti belonged. When his wife died, as she did, from taking an overdose of laudanum, Rossetti was in despair, but how far his feelings were those of sorrow and how far those of remorse it is not discreet to ask. Mr. Benson puts the case very delicately in the language that follows:

"Into the details of Rossetti's wayward impulses it is unnecessary to go; but the jealous hunger of the heart, which is the shadow of devoted love, gave Mrs. Rossetti much cause for unhappiness; and it is enough to say that Rossetti's conscience-stricken condition at his wife's death was based on the knowledge that he had not failed to wound a faithful heart."

The somewhat sensational burying of his poems in his wife's grave is thus described:

"Just before the coffin was closed he left the room in which some friends were assembled, taking with him a manuscript book of poems, and placed it between the cheek and the hair of his dead wife. He then came back and said what he had done, adding that they had often been written when she was suffering, and when he might have been attending to her, and that the solitary text of them should go with her to the grave. It seems that Ford Madox Brown, who was present, thought that this impulsive sacrifice was quixotic, but at such a moment remonstrance was impossible. Rossetti evidently meant it to be a punishment to himself for sacrificing the gentle tendance of love to ambitious dreams, and for even deeper failures of duty, and the volume was buried with his wife in Highgate Cemetery that day."

It was an inglorious sequel to this incident that later on he exhumed his wife's body and recovered the copy of his verses buried with her, and printed them. When Mrs. Rossetti died he made an interesting experiment with three very celebrated men of letters.

"After the death of his wife Rossetti felt entirely unable to live any longer at Chatham Place, and eventually took a lease of a house in Chelsea, No. 16, Cheyne Walk, called Tudor House, which is inseparably connected with his life and fame and tragic decline. It was a large house in what was then a very picturesque and secluded region. There was no embankment then, but all the long-shore bustle of boats and barges. It was an extensive, old-fashioned comfortable house—too big for a single tenant. There lay a great garden behind it, nearly an acre in extent, with limes and other trees, the thick foliage of which darkened the back windows. Rossetti had a roomy studio at the back, and a bedroom with a small breakfast-room attached. There was a dining-room, and a fine drawing-room on the first floor occupying the whole front of the house; above were a number of bedrooms. Besides Rossetti, there were at first three sub-tenants, Mr. Swinburne, Mr. George Meredith, and Mr. William Rossetti. The idea was to lead a kind of collegiate life: Mr. Swinburne and Mr. Meredith had their own sitting-rooms where they received their visitors, and it was understood that all in residence should dine together in the evenings."

The arrangement, for very obvious reasons, did not work well, and had to be discontinued. Here is Mr. Benson's account of the discovery of the lost manuscript:

"One night, seven and a-half years after the funeral, a fire was lit by the side of the grave, and the coffin was raised and opened. The body is described as having been almost unchanged. Rossetti, alone and oppressed with self-reproachful thoughts, sat in a friend's house while the terrible task

was done. The stained and mouldered manuscript was carefully dried and treated, and at last returned to his possession. He copied the poems out himself, and destroyed the volume. But it is impossible to resist a certain feeling of horror at the episode."

In all this there is something sordid. We can understand a man burying his manuscript, and, as it were, in the way of a metaphor, his hopes in his wife's grave, but this "resurrectionism" seems too much in the manner of Burke and Hare to be agreeable. The joint ownership of Kelmscott House, another notable episode in his career, is thus described:

"In 1871 Rossetti became joint-tenant with William Morris of Kelmscott Manor House, in Oxfordshire, near Lechlade, and close to the Thames. He introduced a picture of the house in the background of 'Water Willow.' It is a large, ancient pearly-grey building of rubble-stone, 'battered over' with plaster, the stones showing through; many-gabled, mullioned, stone-slatted, extraordinarily unspoilt, with farm buildings all about it. It had a beautiful garden with fine yew hedges, and stood near an old-world hamlet. The landscape has all the charm of a secluded river valley. William Morris loved the place passionately; but Rossetti, though alive to the dreamy charm of the scene, was not at heart a lover of the homely beauty of the earth. To him the smallest touch of human beauty had more significance than the noblest natural prospect."

Towards the end of his life Rossetti was, in a very literal sense, haunted by devils:

"But his painful hallucinations continued to beset him. Whether he was tricked by his own fancy, or merely misinterpreted ordinary sounds, is not clear, but he was often under the impression that cabmen and other strangers insulted him; airy voices taunted him with epithets of intolerable ignominy; even a thrush which sang insistently in his garden was believed by him to have been trained to ejaculate terms of obloquy to annoy him. Yet his intellectual vigour was absolutely undimmed; his conversation, when he could keep off the dangerous subject, was still vigorous, fascinating, and stimulating. He painted as deftly and suggestively as ever, and wrote with the same entire command of forcible and beautiful English."

The tale of his last illness and death has been told before, and is a repulsive chapter in the history of English literature. It is not beautiful, and we are afraid that the final judgment pronounced upon the poet-painter will not be in any sense so favourable as his friends, Mr. Watts Dunton, Mr. Swinburne, and Mr. Meredith, would like to think. The impression he made on English literature was slight in the extreme. He left no disciples, as he followed no precedent; and the chief result of reading the interesting biography contributed by Mr. Benson to the "English Men of Letters" is a doubt as to whether Rossetti was or was not entitled to be included in this excellent series of critical studies.

FROM THE FARMS.

BACK TO THE LAND.

SOME remarks that appeared in our columns a few weeks ago have had the effect of causing a rather important scheme to be drawn up for dealing with the waifs and strays of cities. The main point is that the Government should be asked for a sum of money sufficient to buy a wide tract of agricultural land in Canada, and that the homeless children should be transported thither and brought up as farm labourers. The justification for asking Government to give a grant is that in any case the maintenance of these children would fall upon the State, and that the purchase of land in Canada would really in the end come cheaper than renting or building houses at home. Undoubtedly the plan would be a useful one, in so far that it would help to bring back these strays into the region of civilisation. Under present conditions the tendency is for the criminal to breed criminals and train them, nor does any State regulation that we know of really avoid this. The only way to do so is to get the infants before the age at which contamination or pollution takes place, say, under five years old, transplant them to some quiet agricultural district, and bring them up to the calling that was given Adam himself. Even when that was done no doubt heredity and original sin would assert themselves and a percentage would go wrong, but we may safely assume that the great majority would automatically become enrolled in the ranks of quiet and law-abiding citizens. The schools, homes, workhouses at present in existence are very far from being satisfactory from the missionary and moral point of view.

THE EDUCATION OF COUNTRY BOYS AND GIRLS.

For some little time past chance has thrown the writer into contact with a number of rural children, and after the amount of discussion that has taken place in regard to education, it is interesting to note the results. From what we can gather the so-called Nature teaching has had no effect whatever. We have questioned a number of boys and girls on the ordinary knowledge that one would expect them to have, and their ignorance is simply appalling. The ordinary plants and flowers growing on the common they do not know the names of. Scarcely one could enumerate as many as half-a-dozen birds in the country-side,



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THE SOURCES OF THE SEVERN.

H. P. Robinson.

and as to the flowers and weeds of the high road, they might as well be non-existent for all the notice taken of them. Reference is made to a typically rural district which has no railway station within a distance of six miles, and where agriculture is the only pursuit. The boys and girls are trained just as if they were meant to be clerks and shop-keepers all their lives. They pass certain standards, as they call them, but apparently it has not dawned on the rural schoolmaster that eye and ear and hand want training as well as mind; that, in fact, no mental training is possible unless the habit of observation be first cultivated. This state of things cannot be described as other than deplorable.

THE QUALITIES OF MILK.

It was a very interesting and valuable lecture that Mr. Lloyd delivered recently before the Bedford Chamber of Agriculture. Mr. Lloyd is very well known as a chemist of the British Dairy Farmers' Association, and his opinion is of weight even when it comes into contact with that of the doctors. The latter have been exercising their minds a good deal about milk recently, since it has become so regular an article of diet,

industry of milk production, these points will in future require his close and careful attention.

SPRING WORK.

Since the improvement that has taken place in the weather, spring work on the farms has been carried on with great energy and cheerfulness. It is still a backward year, but the season contains more promise now than it has done since Christmas. On the hedgerows the hawthorn buds are beginning to expand. The trees in the woodland are burgeoning, and everywhere April is smiling with her promise of flowers. On the wide fields the farmer is hard at work burning the last of the couch grass, and getting in the last of his sowings, and ploughing and drilling the potato grounds. On the meadows little lambs are frisking with their mothers, and in the Southern Counties the lambing season is well-nigh over, though in the wilder North it has little more than begun. Here and there calves and foals are now to be seen, appropriate ornaments of the springtime. Yet it can scarcely now be an early season for crops. The cold wet soil left by the floods of so many months is the worst possible for germination, and even permanent grasses do not come away readily in it. In fact, the



A. Horsley Hinton.

SPRING ON THE RIVER.

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especially for those whose stomachs are young and tender. Now the doctor sees that it is dangerous to have variability in the character of milk, and yet if it is sent straight from the cow that variability is inevitable, since the quality at the morning milking differs so much from the quality at the evening milking. The medical men, in order to obtain some sort of uniformity, would have milk manipulated, Pasteurised, sterilised, bottled, or done something else with. Mr. Lloyd, on the other hand, holds, and we agree with him, that milk is never so nutritious and palatable as when it comes direct from the cow. And the remedy is in the hands of the farmer. He ought to possess himself of as many cows as possible, and gain uniformity by combining their milk. It should be arranged, too, that the milking periods vary, and that the produce of one milking should be mixed with that of another. Again, there is very little gain in keeping a cow which gives poor milk. One which yields rich milk costs no more to keep, and the farmer would be well advised in attending to that side of it. It is pretty evident that, if he wishes to keep his hold on the important

pastures are considerably behind what they usually are at this time of year. So are the inmates of the garden and orchard.

A FAMOUS HERD.

Mr. Garrett Taylor's head of red-polled cattle at Whitlingham is well known to the public, and general regret will be felt that its dispersal has been rendered necessary by the Local Government Board requiring the Corporation of Norwich, which owns Whitlingham, to work the sewage farm. What was valuable about Whitlingham was the careful record of the milk yield which has been kept since 1887, and published annually since 1899. At present there are eighty cows in the herd, and last year they gave an average yield of milk of about 597 gallons per head. At the top of the list is a five year old cow which gave 10,932lb. last year, and had given 12,545lb. after dropping her second calf on November 30th, 1902. The second on the list is also a five year old cow. But the most curious feature of the herd is the length of time which cows remain in milk. One young cow was in milk from July 11th, 1901, till October 29th, 1903, a period of 833 days.

SIR EDGAR VINCENT'S STUD.

ONE of that type of sportsmen, patrons of the Turf for the pure love of sport, and with a view to maintaining and improving the high standard of excellence of the English horse, is Sir Edgar Vincent.

Amid the cares of business life—he is a magnate of finance—and his Parliamentary duties as member for Exeter, Sir Edgar still manages to find time for an occasional flying visit to Newmarket, where he, for some years past, has had a lengthy string of thorough-breds in training.

Born in 1857, Sir Edgar Vincent, after leaving Eton, where he gained distinction both as a scholar and on the river, entered the Coldstreams when he was twenty, but after a few years in the Service he found a more congenial field in Eastern Europe, filling numerous responsible positions in Turkey and Greece, and when only twenty-six he became President of the Council of Ottoman Public Debt. He then was for six years Financial Adviser to the Egyptian Government, until 1889, when he became Governor of the Imperial Ottoman Bank, Constantinople. For his services he was, in 1887, created a K.C.M.G. He is a master of no fewer than eleven languages, and has written a Grammar of Modern Greek, which has for many years been used by the University of Athens. In 1890 he married Lady Helen Duncombe, one of the four beautiful daughters of the Earl of Feversham, of whom the eldest became the Duchess of Leinster, and the third Lady Cynthia Graham.

Like some other leading votaries of the Turf, notably the late Lord Falmouth, the late Duke of Westminster, and the present head of the ducal house of Portland, Sir Edgar Vincent is a non-betting owner, being content to race for the stakes alone. If the horses pay expenses, so much the better, for ownership is an expensive hobby, especially when, in addition to a long string of race-horses, there is also a breeding stud, which latter must necessarily for some time be run at a loss. But, stay—in classifying the three noblemen above I am perhaps going a little too far, for I believe on one occasion Lord Falmouth broke his rule to the extent of a sixpenny bet! The story goes that the wife of his trainer fancied the chance of a certain filly for the Oaks, and expressed her confidence that she would win. Lord Falmouth was not so sanguine, and in fact meditated striking her out of the race. So certain, however, was the lady—who, by the way, is said to have been Mrs. John Scott—that she offered to bet his lordship sixpence on the result. She was right in her selection, for the filly passed the judge first; and Lord Falmouth, in settlement of his debt, presented the lady with a brooch in the shape of a brand-new sixpence set in diamonds.

Sir Edgar, whose colours at first were "green and yellow hoops, yellow cap," and were altered at the end of the season 1901 to "black, turquoise cap," entered on his Turf career in



W. A. Rouch.

REGGIO.

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1899, when he had several horses in training with J. Watson, at Newmarket. His opening season saw him successful in five races, placed to his credit by Bonnebosq and Nil Desperandum, who secured two and three races respectively, the total amount of his winnings being £1,645. In the next year, although he was successful in six races, the amount fell somewhat short of this, being £1,538, to which Broken Melody and Latheronwheel (renamed Sheerness) were the chief contributors.

In 1901 the preparation of his representatives was in the hands of J. Watson and F. W. Day, but the work was really undertaken by the latter's son, Reginald, who has continued the duty up to the present time. In that year Sir Edgar was very successful in a small way, twelve of his horses placing to his credit nineteen races, of the value of £4,729. Chief among his representatives were Seringapatam, with two races, value £586; Sheerness, one, value £879; Punctilio, three, value £2,075; Pistol, two, value £1,049; Wabun, one, value, £255; Syerla, one, value £388; and Blue Peter three, value £654. The year 1902 saw his number of victories fall one short of the preceding year, but the total amount won reached £7,948. Of the seven horses carrying his colours to victory, the chief were: Wabun, two races, value £1,670; Pistol, three races, value £2,350; Principality, six, value £2,004; Parody and Countermark. Last year was comparatively a lean season, as

with nine winners, of fourteen races, the total amount secured only reached £3,808 10s., Wabun, Parody, and Countermark, together with Don Paez, Clairetta, and Midshipman, bringing the most grist to the mill. Countermark was very unfortunate, for after his success in the Craven Stakes, and running a good fourth to Rock Sand for the Two Thousand Guineas he seemed to have several valuable races at his mercy, but time after time finished second.

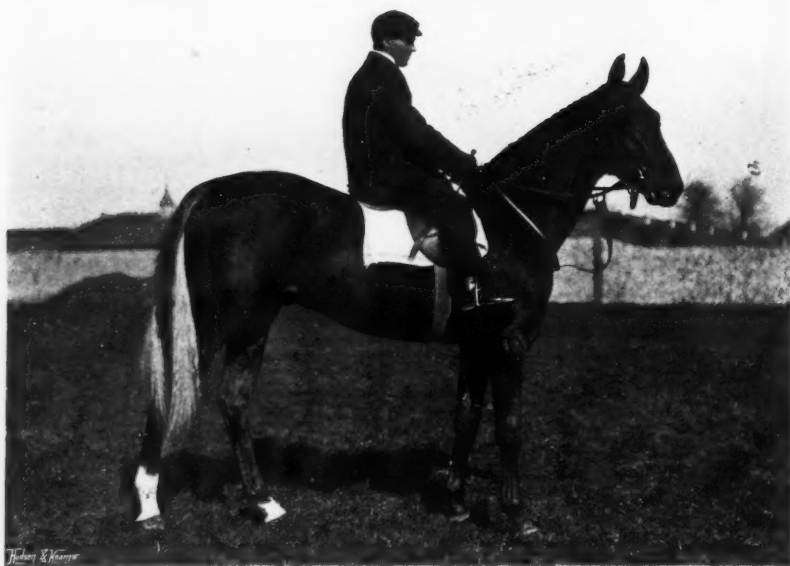
It was with a feeling of pleasurable anticipation that, in response to Sir Edgar's kind letter of permission, the representative of COUNTRY LIFE recently paid a visit to his commodious training quarters at The Terrace, Newmarket. It was early spring, in fact, what we are pleased to call winter was scarcely over, so that it was hardly to be expected that we should find Mr. Reginald Day's charges in that spick-and-span condition of coat which one looks for later in the year. Still, as will be seen from



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PARODY.

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SHAH JEHAN.

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the numerous photographs which we were able to secure, the various candidates for this season's honours were looking remarkably fit, and undoubtedly did great credit to their trainer. We were fortunate enough to witness the work of a large number of Sir Edgar Vincent's string. The leader in the picture showing the string at exercise in the Home Paddock is Rivaulx, a smart-looking colt by St. Angelo out of Lord Feversham's well-known mare Queen of the Dale, who has been as successful at the stud as she was on the race-course, where she placed to her owner's credit a number of races over a distance of ground. Several of her progeny, notably Uncle Sol, have inherited their dam's liking for long courses. By the way, Queen of the Dale is not in the Stud Book, but it would be absurd to call her a half-bred, notwithstanding the fact that the pedigree of her maternal ancestress, Maggie Lauder, cannot be traced. It is good old Yorkshire blood, and her near relations, Queen of Hearts, Queen of Diamonds, and Galloping Queen, form a bevy of matrons who between them have produced any number of



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IN THE HOME PADDOCK.

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MIDSHIPMAN.

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winners. Queen of Hearts, for instance, is the dam of King Crow, who, in one season, placed to the credit of his owner, Mr. R. C. Vyner, the Great Northern Handicap, the Northumberland Plate, and the Manchester Cup.

Following in Rivaulx's wake, Reggio and Shah Jehan are to be recognised. Reggio, by Kilcock out of Golden Lily, is a grandson of the St. Leger winner, Kilwarlin, who, although nearly left at the post for that race, made up the lost ground in truly marvellous fashion. Reggio is a good-looking bay with a crooked blaze down his face, and as he stands in his photograph he looks every inch an equine gentleman. With quarters like his, and his great length from hip to hock, Reggio is all over a galloper, and this is as it should be, for his sire, Kilcock, was one of the fastest horses over short courses that ever looked through a bridle. Reggio is a really taking colt, and when for the first time he is seen walking round the paddock before a race, carrying himself with a light-hearted swagger, as if the whole place belonged to him, people will wonder that he only cost sixty-four guineas as a yearling. But when they see him extended in the preliminary, possibly those who go into the ring and utter Reggio's name in brief but pregnant conversation with one or other of the loud-voiced gentlemen who carry the wealth of Cræsus (more or less) in their satchels, will, when the race is over, have cause to congratulate themselves on their acumen. Reggio was bred by the late Mr. W. R. Marshall, who formerly owned the famous stayer Shannon, and in quite recent years ran second with Damocles for the Derby won by Flying Fox.

Taking Shah Jehan next, it will at once be seen from his photograph that he is a two year old of character. He has a very distinctive mark in his flaxen tail, thickly strewn with grey hairs. Bought as a yearling last September, at Doncaster, out of Mr. Simon Harrison's string, Shah Jehan's veins are full of the best blood in the Stud Book, for he is by the King's great stallion, Persimmon. He does not, however, follow his sire in colour, being a chestnut, and unlike the general run of the Galopin tribe, the youngster is, as a rule, inclined to take things easily, but occasionally he can show plenty of fire. He is of good size, standing 15.3 on the best of legs and feet, and has plenty of length and liberty. He should develop into a first-class three year old. On breeding lines he should win good races, for he is bred on the same principle as Sceptre and Zinfandel, being, like those two famous children of Persimmon, out of a mare of Stockwell descent, but Shah Jehan's dam, Showbread, traces back to Stockwell through Breadknife, Craig Millar, and Blair Athol, whereas the dams of his two distinguished relatives are both daughters of Bend Or. Blair Athol was even more successful as a racehorse than Stockwell's other son, Doncaster (sire of Bend Or), but the Blair Athol branch of Stockwell has not in this country attained the same success as the Doncaster branch. Suitably mated, however, there is no reason why a daughter of Breadknife should not produce an equine champion, as in the present case of Shah Jehan's dam.

One of the most prominent of Sir Edgar Vincent's string is Paroly, who is easily recognisable, the big splashes of white on her quarters being very conspicuous. She is a grand-daughter of Melton, the Derby winner. His son—her sire, Avington—

was also a really good horse, and carried the "black and white diamonds" of Sir William Throckmorton to victory in the Duke of York Stakes at Kempton Park as a three year old, while on the same course, in the following season, he won the Jubilee, the most valuable of the spring handicaps. In the Royal Hunt Cup he was beaten only by Victor Wild, who was in receipt of much weight. In addition to Parody, Avington is the sire of a number of smart performers, including Barbette, who won the Gimcrack Stakes last August at York, and earlier finished a capital second to Henry the First in another race. Parody can stay, and last season was only beaten a neck by Wavelet's Pride in the Great Metropolitan at Epsom. In addition to the Babraham Handicap Plate at Newmarket, she has won several long-distance races. It is interesting here to note that Parody is less inbred to Eclipse than many race-horses. To give an example of this: Parody in her thirty-two quarterings has sixteen strains of Eclipse, ten of Herod, and five of Matcham, whereas Claretta has twenty-one strains of Eclipse, only eight of Herod, and three of the other great eighteenth century horse. To these three stallions and no others all modern English race-horses trace back, with the exception of a few recent importations from the United States and other foreign sources. Parody is on the small side, whereas Claretta tops sixteen hands.

Another little one, Midshipman, is deserving of more than passing mention. He is a shapely colt, by Ocean Wave out of Pennywise—the latter a good-looking daughter of Westminster out of Bonnie Mary II., by Wisdom—and on his sire's side traces back to Eclipse's great rival, Herod. As a yearling he was so small that buyers refused to look at him, with the result that he passed out of the sale-ring unsold, and was afterwards privately acquired by Sir Edgar Vincent, whose good judgment was once again exemplified, for the little colt last year scored three successes, beating a big field on each occasion. In addition to this, he was twice second, four times placed third, and twice fourth, and only twice did he appear in a less conspicuous position. But for his lack of inches, Midshipman might easily develop into a really good handicap horse. But, even as he is, he can boast the distinction of having defeated, with the worst of the weights, such smart performers as Milford Lad, the Moirheen Rhu filly, and Tamasha. He may be expected during the present season to carry the black, turquoise cap with credit.

With regard to Don Paez, there is a "no surrender" sort of air about him, which to keen Turfites makes amends for his Roman nose and rather drooping quarters. He is by Donovan (winner of £55,154 10s. in stakes in two seasons) out of Hampton Agnes, by Royal Hampton out of Jolie Agnes, by Hermit out of a King Tom mare, and is, therefore, full of the best running blood. During the present year he is engaged in several valuable events, including the Imperial Plate at Lingfield and the North Derby. Last year he was fairly successful, winning the Somerville Stakes at Newmarket in the spring, and a Nursery, also at headquarters, in October. Although he was thereabouts in several races elsewhere, he did not quite get home. On one occasion he was the only rival not frightened out of the field by the flying Pretty Polly, the champion two year old, but, needless to say, he failed to extend her.

A grand-looking, big-boned, massive golden chestnut colt is Orgueil, who is the only one of the four yearlings sold by Lord Londonderry in 1902 that has yet to win a race. Orgueil is the first foal of his dam, Lady Orme, and is the result of an alliance with Pride (by Merry Hampton out of the late Mr. Robert Peck's good mare Superba), Mr. Botterill's well-known stallion, who, in his racing days, defeated the crack French horse, Omnium II., for the Alexandra Plate at Ascot, and The Rush for the Gold Vase. Although a big-growing youngster, Orgueil ran creditably in several races last season, and he has wintered well. It is a curious fact about Orgueil, that in the print of the original photograph were two black spots, and the operator gave instructions for the obliteration of three spots. Upon more closely inspecting the photograph to discover the third spot, it was found that it referred to the little button-shaped excrescence which is to be seen on the middle of his back, and with which he was born.

Another of Sir Edgar's string is Claretta, and good judgment was displayed when, in the summer of 1902, she was bought out of a selling race for 470 guineas, for she last year won two races worth half as much again, and has still her own racing

value, while she may make a good brood mare when her Turf career is over. If half-mile races were still in vogue she would prove a little gold-mine, but five furlongs is her extreme limit, as was proved in the De Warrenne Handicap at Lewes last August, when, looking all over a winner, she was caught close home and beaten by Sundridge, the champion sprinter of the year, who was giving her the huge allowance of 50lb. Her sire, Gone Coor, is a son of Galopin, and her dam, Claire, is a daughter of Lowlander. This is a unique pedigree, for Lowlander, nearly



W. A. Rouch.

DON PAEZ.

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thirty years ago, ran in a famous match for £1,000 a side against Galopin, which the latter won.

We were unable to secure a photograph of Countermark, by Worcester out of Assay, who during the seasons 1902 and 1903 was seen out frequently, and it is a curious fact that, whilst out of twenty-seven races in all but seven he finished in the first four, he only won twice, being second on no fewer than eleven occasions, four times third, and three times fourth. Countermark



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ORGUEIL.

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is closely related to the recent Lincolnshire Handicap winner, Uninsured, whose dam, Surety (now dead), was his half-sister, being a daughter of Assay.

Pistol is another of Sir Edgar's representatives who has been at times very much to the fore. In 1902 he ran second to Sceptre in the Two Thousand Guineas, and, although conceding the sex allowance of 5lb., was only beaten two lengths, with Ard Patrick (level weights) three lengths behind him, Rising Glass fourth, and Port Blair, Duke of Westminster, and Royal

Lancer amongst those not placed. In that season Pistol, who as a yearling cost 250 guineas, won the Crawford Stakes from a lot of speedy horses, and subsequently placed to his owner's credit the Payne Stakes and the North Derby of 1,275 sovs. Pistol is by the great Australian sire Carbine out of Wenonah, a brood mare of much distinction, all of whose stock have shown marked ability. In 1902 Pistol's elder half-brother, Wabun, by Sheen out of Wenonah, defeated Royal George for the spring handicap known as the Queen's Prize (value 1,500 sovs.), run for at the Kempton Park Easter Meeting. Behind the pair, of whom Wabun got the best of a protracted finish by a neck, were such smart horses as Bistonian, Cottager, St. Beurre, and others.

In 1901, Multiform, purchased from Mr. Stead of New Zealand at a long figure, formed one of Sir Edgar Vincent's string. The horse was a crack performer in his own country, but unfortunately went wrong in his wind, and Mr. Stead very liberally took him back, sending in exchange Screw Gun. He was renamed Seringapatam, and won several races, including the Harewood Handicap at the York August Meeting. Seringapatam is no longer in training, but the string for this season includes, besides those already mentioned, a number of others, of whom Tracas, Chapeau, and the filly by Tarporley out of Verdict are useful three year olds, who, with various other juveniles, bring up the string to a total of twenty-one.

In addition to his racing stud, Sir Edgar, who, as already mentioned, takes a great interest in breeding, has a stud at his country house, Esher Place, where he has nearly half a score of brood mares of fashionable pedigree. Several of them trace, in direct descent (on the female side), from the famous original mare known as Tregonwell's Natural Barb mare. In this country, it may be stated, every British-bred race-horse now



W. A. Rouch.

CLAIRETTA AND HER TRAINER (REGINALD DAY).

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running is descended from one or another of those original mares whose names appear in Volume I. of the Stud Book. Tregonwell's Natural Barb mare lived about the middle of the seventeenth century, as near as we can judge; at any rate, she was mated with Place's White Turk, the property of Oliver Cromwell's stud-groom. Punctilio and Queen Butterfly (own sisters) are members of this family.

Mr. Reginald Day, who is still in the early twenties, is a young man of great ability and promise, and has lived among horses all his life. For twelve years he lived in Australia with his father, Mr. F. W. Day, who there followed the profession of trainer and veterinary surgeon, which he now pursues with equal success at Newmarket. Father and son came back to England eight or nine years ago, and for the past four years Reggie Day has had charge of Sir Edgar's string. The condition in which he has turned out the various candidates to fulfil their engagements proves his thoroughness in the work which he has on hand.

NORTH COUNTRY BRIDGES.



A. H. Robinson.

EAMONT BRIDGE, PENRITH.

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WHILE in most parts of the South of England permanent bridges were built as a convenience and an aid to trade, in the northern counties, where mountains pour down torrents in flood-time, stone bridges were an absolute necessity if any business or trade was to be carried on at all. The Thames, or Ouse, or Kennet could be crossed by a ferry where necessary. But when the Eden, or the Eamont, or the Upper Tyne, or the Esk come down in roaring flood, no ferry or boat can be used for days, and no wooden bridge could stand the force of the current or the shocks of the flood wrack carried upon it.

In the South a flood means an overflowing of the land in the river valley. In the North it simply means the filling up of the

river channel with an immense volume of boiling, hurrying water, terrible to behold when at its fullest and fiercest. In the old days, when there was no really pressing "business" in these counties, every large ford had an inn near it. For custom the inn largely depended on the floods. People arrived at the ford, found the river in flood, and waited at the inn one, two, or three days till it was possible to cross. Nowadays a bridge has been built, either at the old ford or elsewhere, and these inns or waiting-houses are converted into the over-large homes of farmers.

Eamont Bridge, of which a picture is given above, is a very good type of the northern river crossing. It is near Penrith, and joins Cumberland to Westmorland on the southern bank.



A. H. Robinson.

GRANGE BRIDGE, KESWICK.

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On the north side stands an inn, which possibly stood there before any bridge was built, when it was used by the people who crossed the ford. For a sign it has a Highlander and an Englishman shaking hands, and for motto "Welcome here to Cumberland."

The beautiful stream which it crosses is the Eamont, which drains Ullswater, and then, after a short and rapid course, falls into the Eden near Eden Hall, the ancient home of the Musgraves, the wardens of the Western Marches. Standing on Eamont Bridge, and looking southwards, one sees another bridge not a quarter of a mile away. That is Lowther Bridge, for the other

morland and Cumberland mainly held their land by a peculiar tenure. They were bound to come south and meet the English kings, or their deputies, at the river Duddon, and to lead them through their two difficult and dangerous counties, the local levies forming the van, as far as the Scotch border. But when they reached the Esk, they were under no obligation to go further. The invasion took place without them, though they were bound to come to meet the English when they retreated, and then to become the rear-guard of the army. They had also an "option" of declaring war with the Scots or not. They were not bound to take a side, even when the English and Scotch



A. H. Robinson.

FROM THE RIVER.

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mountain-fed stream, the Lowther, falls into the Eamont about a mile below, opposite the huge old fortress of the Cliffords, Brougham Castle. There is another, and still finer, edifice, Brougham Bridge, the lowest on the Eamont.

In this beautiful valley you are in the very heart of what was the stronghold of the old Lancastrian lords, and the highway of the invading Scots. Close by, at Clifton Moor, the last fight was fought with the Scotch on English soil, when the local troops engaged Charles Edward's Highlanders on their retreat in the '45. It was by this road that the English armies used to follow up the Scotch raiders. But the good farmers of West-

kings fought, unless they liked, as they had to go to war with "unlimited liability," while the English of the South exposed neither houses nor cattle to raids.

The "awful iniquity" of the sale of indulgences was one of the chief points of the German Reformers against the Papacy. But in Cumberland they had no scruple whatever about selling indulgences, centuries before Luther "filled his huge Wittenburg lungs" to denounce such iniquities, in a really good cause, like that of building a bridge. At Great Salkeld, on the Eden, a bridge was badly wanted. So the then Bishop of Carlisle sold indulgences right and left to all and sundry,



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WATENDBATH BRIDGE, NEAR KESWICK.

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ASHNESS BRIDGE, DERWENTWATER.

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and presented the proceeds to the bridge-builders. Perhaps this course did not commend itself to Heaven, for the bridge is gone; but there is said to be part of one of the stone piers deep in the bed of the Eden.

It is difficult to tell the dates of these Cumberland bridges. The stone is not of a kind which "weathers" much, and buildings erected fifty years ago look almost as old as those of similar red sandstone which have stood for five centuries. Also the people never had much money or time to spend in decorating their buildings, which leaves still less material for judging dates; but the present tendency is to build them very solidly, and with

as to give the instantaneous suggestion of menace, danger, and death. Its waters are dark and livid where they are not boiling floods of swarthy foam. The surface is wonderfully broken and uneven, and the roar of its waters deafening. When the two rivers, Lowther and Eamont, have joined by Brougham Castle, they carry with them trees, rocks, and minor *débris* like any torrent of the Alps. Further down the Eamont, in mid-stream, stands a huge round rock, which may weigh some fifty tons. Usually the waters just touch its base, making round it a channel some 2ft. deep. After twenty-four hours of rain the river tops this rock, the shape of which may be just discerned



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BRIDGE AT THE BOTTOM OF THE HONISTER PASS, BUTTERMERE.

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high semi-circular arches. Big trout nearly always lie against the piers on the down-stream side, and if they can be caught nowhere else, there is just a chance of one under Brougham Bridge.

The size of the bridges often seems almost disproportioned to that of the streams which they cross. But those who think so reckon without their river. Take, for instance, the Lowther, which on an ordinary spring or autumn day barely covers one-half of the bottom of its course, amid great bare, white, rounded rocks and beds of stones quarried from miles of mountain and fell, between Lowther Castle and Hawes Water high in the hills. Three days' rain converts the Lowther into such a boiling torrent

like some gigantic mushroom beneath a depth of 10ft. of surging flood.

It is somewhat curious that in ancient days no one ever thought of crossing these rivers by the suspension bridges of rope or twisted birch cables so common over the torrents of the Himalayas. Wherever the stream runs over a gorge with both sides fairly near the stream there was a chance of making a suspension bridge. But the idea which the Highlanders of India created, and have used for ages, never seems to have occurred to the British mind. There are a few very high, narrow, notchy, and dangerous wooden foot-bridges over the Eden, and that is all, except those of durable stone.

LYNCHESES—THEIR HISTORY & ORIGIN.

IN very many parts of England, especially in the chalk countries, wherever there is a knoll or moderately steep hillside, will be seen curious terraces like steps, now usually covered with grassy pasture. These terraces are sometimes old sea-beaches, or the sides of river valleys, the steps marking the ancient extent of the water as it shrank from age to age. But the majority of these curious scars upon the rounded hillsides have a human origin, and one of a very ancient and historic kind, related to a form of land tenure and

agriculture at least a thousand years old, and in some cases more ancient still. The name given to these steps, if they retain a name, is usually lynchets, or lynces; sometimes they are called "the links"; but they have nothing to do with golf "links," unless that would mean hills or hillocks. The lynchets, which may be seen in great perfection on the hill above Abbotsbury Swannery, and from the railway near Luton, and between Cambridge and Hitchin, and in various places in the Sussex Downs, as well as between Calais and Paris, were

the result of the "open field" system of cultivation, which was introduced into this country by the old Angles and Saxons, but would seem to have been practised in France by the quite different race which inhabited the land across the Channel. Every ancient English village appears to have conducted its farmwork on this "open field" system, which seems a most stupid and wasteful method, however congenial to the Saxon; but, stupid or not, it continued in general use till the Black Death, and so far as ownership went, it lasted, with all its inconveniences, till from 1760 to 1844 in at least 4,000 parishes in England.

No one had enclosed fields, or farms in a block surrounded by hedges, as now. The whole village tillage ground lay open and unfenced. But this was all divided up into little sections of an oblong shape, called "yard-lands," either acres or, commonly, half-acres, each separated from the next by a bank or bulk of earth. These wretched little strips represented about as much as a man with a team of oxen could plough in a day. A man might own twenty of these strips, or he might own only one. Thus at Hitchin, selected by the late Mr. Seeborn as one of the latest survivals, one lot of 289 separate acres was held by forty-eight owners, and of these thirty-eight owners only held one acre! If possible, these sets of strips were divided into three masses or "shots," and each block was fallowed once every three years, the owners only ploughing and sowing the other two sets. When the corn was cut the flocks of the village were run over the whole lot in common. But it was clearly understood that anyone might, if he chose, fence off his little strips, only then his sheep or cows might only feed there, and nowhere else. The land which was not cultivated was kept as common pasture.

There is a scene in *Piers Ploughman* describing the system in full swing, with the whole village out in the "field" busy on their strips. It is a "faire field full of folke," where "alle maner of men" are working together. The whole village has turned out to the job, and cooks are crying "hote pies, hote," which looks as if there were more system and method about communal cooking in those days than about communal farming. He also notes that at such times there was not only wine but roast meat in the ale-houses, which looks as if Lord Grey's Public-house Trust had been anticipated in the days of Edward III. *Piers* himself, when invited to leave, says he must first plough his half-acre:

"I have an half acre to eyre, bi the heighe way,
Hadde I eyren (ploughed) this half acre and sowed it after,
I would wend with you, and the way teach."

These acre strips were measured by the rods, or goads,

with which the oxen were driven, forty rods long, and four rods wide.

By custom a furlong was forty rods, and four side by side made an acre. Mr. Seeborn, in whose "Village Communities" the foregoing facts will be found stated in much greater detail, says that a thousand years ago the same system obtained in Bavaria, only the Roman rod of 10ft., instead of the English one of 18ft., was in use. There were as many thousands of these acre or half-acre strips as the parish land could hold. After the Black Death the system was gradually dropped, but the mixed up holdings remained until Enclosure Acts were passed to lump the strips of separate owners of arable



T. Reveloy.

THE CROWN OF THE HILL.

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land together, and to divide the grassland in due proportion, these Acts, as we have said, beginning in 1760, and going on till 1844.

Mr. Seeborn says: "A less universal but equally peculiar feature in hilly districts" (we would add a much more permanent one, too), "is the lynch, and it may often be observed when every other trace of an open field has been removed by enclosure. Its right of survival lies in its indestructibility. When a hillside formed part of the open field the strips were always made to run not up and down the hill, but horizontally along it; and in ploughing the custom for ages was always to turn the sod of the furrow downhill, the plough always returning one way idle. If the whole hillside were ploughed in one field, this would result in a gradual travelling of the soil from the top to the bottom of the field, and it might not be noticed. But as in the open field system the hillside was ploughed in strips, with unploughed balks between them, no sod could pass in the ploughing from one strip to the next, or to the one below or above.

"The process of moving the sod would go on age after age just within each individual strip. In other words, each year's ploughing took a sod from the higher edge of the strip and placed it on the lower edge, and the result was that the strips became, in process of time, long level terraces one above the other, and the balks between them grew into steep rough banks of long grass, covered often with natural self-sown brambles and bushes. These banks between the plough-made terraces are generally known as lynes, or 'lincs,' and the word is often applied to the terraces themselves, which are called 'the lincs.'"

The examples here shown are just west of Lockinge House, the seat of Lady Wantage, and about two miles from the birthplace of King Alfred at Wantage. The ground is now pasture, and is used as a golf course. The matted roots of the turf no doubt do much to preserve this interesting formation. The lynes, or terraces, overlook this, and are most strongly marked, as is natural, on the steepest or western side. On the others they are scarcely visible.

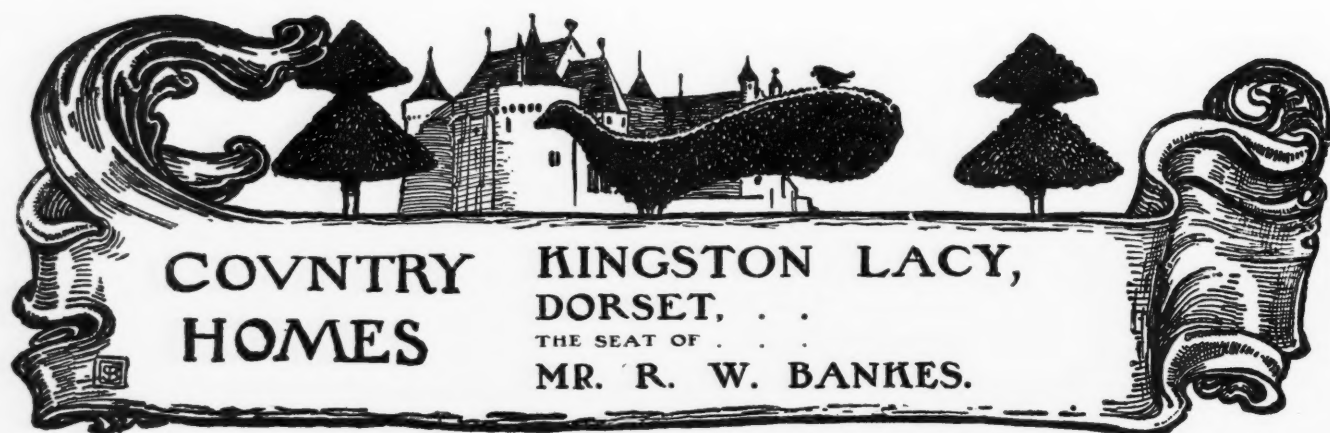
C. J. CORNISH.



T. Reveloy.

LYNCES NEAR WANTAGE.

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MANY and varied are the interests of this famous Dorsetshire house, which lies within some two miles of old Wimborne Minster on the Blandford Road. The place owes its name in the first place to some king, and in the next to its having been possessed by the great house of Lacy, Earls of Lincoln. It then had the good fortune to come into possession of the old family of

Bankes, and it was Sir Ralph Bankes who began the house shortly after the Restoration. Sir John Bankes, Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, who had preceded him, was a remarkable man in his time, of high professional reputation, and of wealth rapidly growing. It was he who purchased the estate of Corfe Castle from the widow of Sir Edward Coke, a place which became notable from the heroic defence

his widow made there in the Civil War. Before being raised to the Bench, the future Chief Justice had represented the Crown in the famous case of John Hampden. He adhered steadily to the King's cause, but, for a time, earned the Royal displeasure by caution and moderation, and was regarded favourably by the Parliament, which requested that he should be continued in his office. His wife, Lady Mary, will ever be famous for the heroic stand she made at Corfe Castle during a period of nearly three years, in which there were really two sieges. The assailants were compelled to draw off at the end of the first of them, but finally the castle was reduced by the treachery of one of the garrison, and Lady Bankes was allowed to depart with the full honours of war. Several pictures which belonged to her husband, and which had adorned the castle, are now at Kingston Lacy, where the keys of the castle and other memorials of the defence are preserved. There, also, in a fine gallery below the great marble staircase, stands her statue in bronze, holding the sword and the key, while in a beautiful niche is a seated bronze figure of the king in whose cause she waged war so stoutly.

The family has given birth to several other distinguished sons. Mr. Henry Bankes of Kingston Lacy, great-great-grandson of the Chief Justice, sat for forty-six years for the close Borough of Corfe Castle, and afterwards for his county, and was a general supporter of Pitt and a prominent member of the House of Commons. His elder son, Mr. William John Bankes, was the well-known traveller in the East; and another son, Mr. George Bankes, who died in 1856, was the last lawyer to hold the office of Cursitor Baron of the Exchequer, and for a



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THE MARBLE STAIRWAY.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



THE GALLERY.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

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THE SPANISH ROOM.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

great many years represented Corfe Castle and Wareham in Parliament.

Having said so much about the family of the possessors, we may turn to the house itself, built, as we have said, by Sir Ralph Banks. In the pediment of the north front appears the date 1663, which makes it impossible for the work to have been carried on under Inigo Jones, as some have suggested, for that architect died in 1652, but his kinsman Webb may well have been engaged upon it. It has since undergone many changes, its old red brick having been faced with stone, and much work having been added over the main cornice. Sir Charles Barry was the architect, and many features of the Italian style were added about the year 1854. The mansion is a building of stately character, with much dignity in its features, and having fine balustraded terraces and gardens for its foreground.

Within, the house which Sir Ralph Banks built, and which his successors have adorned, is dignified also, and invested with some character of magnificence, while, as a treasure-house of art, it is well known to all connoisseurs. The beautiful gallery, which has been referred to, with its bronze statues, brings the visitor to the magnificent marble stairway, 30ft. in width, which was added by Mr. William John Banks about the year 1834, at the suggestion of Sir Charles Barry. The staircase is of white Carrara marble, but variegated marbles have been used for the balustrades, with bronzes and statues, and the whole character is that of stately splendour. The doors are framed in marble, and the friezes and carvings are admirable in craftsmanship. The rooms of the house are lofty and well proportioned, and not one of them is without objects of supreme interest. Successive owners have added to the great collections of pictures, many of

which are by the most famous masters, and some of them came, as we have said, from Corfe Castle, certain of them seeming to have been presented to the family by Charles I. There are beautiful vases, inlaid cabinets, miniatures, enamels, and many other forms of art adornment, but the pictures exceed all else in interest. The late Mr. W. J. Banks was a great collector, particularly of Italian and Spanish pictures, but many of the best examples have been in the possession of the family ever since they were painted. Some of them have magnificently carved frames, and there are certainly few collections that can rival that at Kingston Lacy in their varied interests.

The rich and beautiful apartment known as the Spanish Room is one of the most attractive in the house. Its walls are covered with Cordova leather-work, and it has a ceiling which came from the Contarini Palace at Venice, designed by Sansovino, and having a central compartment representing the

apotheosis of a saint by Paul Veronese, and compartments containing cupids by Pordenone. It is not our purpose to catalogue the pictures, but a very fine whole-length of Philip IV., by Velasquez, and a head of Cardinal Borgia, by the same artist, may be referred to, as also Murillo's famous "Beggar Boys," a "Saint Augustine Receiving Inspiration from Heaven," a "Santa Rosa and the Infant Saviour," and another very fine work. This Spanish collection includes paintings by Zurbaran, Ribalta, Morales, Espinosa, and others. Extraordinarily interesting are the pictures in the Saloon, which include two whole-lengths by Rubens, one of them of the Marchesa Spinola, as bride of the Doge Doria, and the other of Maria Grimaldi, brought from the Grimaldi Palace at Genoa. There are magnificent Vandycks of Charles I., Queen Henrietta Maria, the Prince of Wales, afterwards Charles II., and the Duke of York, afterwards James II., and the Princess Mary. These were brought from



Corfe Castle before its destruction. Another extremely beautiful work is a Raphael in the artist's late manner, which bears the mark of Charles II., and was brought from the Escorial. It has a magnificent carved frame, with the arms of all its former possessors. Here also Titian, Salvator Rosa, and Sir Peter Lely are represented.

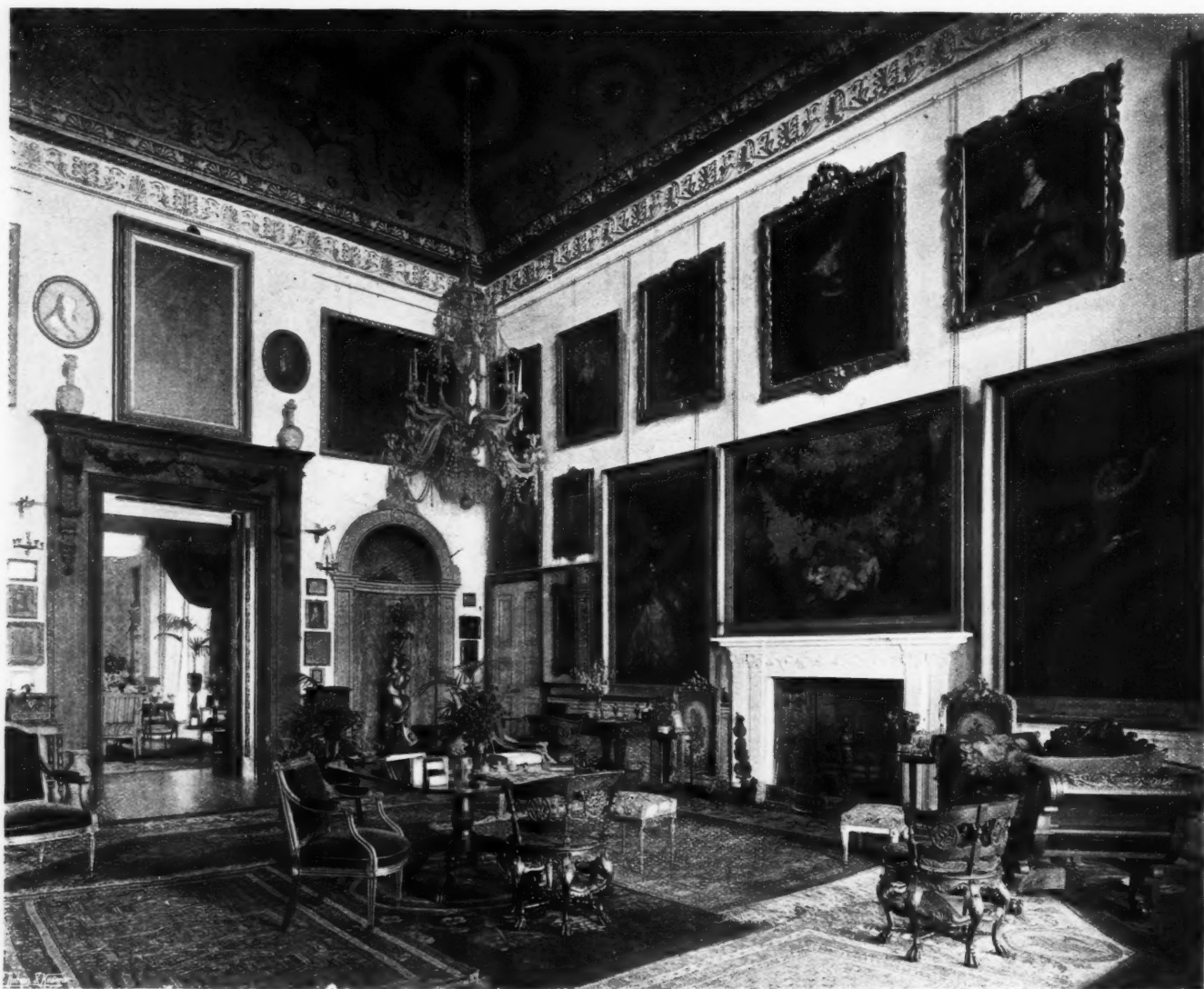
The beautiful Library has its walls clothed with valuable books, and above them many famous pictures, including St. Gregory, St. Jerome, St. Augustine, and St. Ambrose. But perhaps the most remarkable feature is the great ceiling composition by Guido, which represents Dawn sending forth Day and Night, and is truly a colossal picture of great power and beautiful colour, although it seems, in its way, overpowering. The Dining Room is distinguished by the possession of a magnificent "Judgment of Solomon," by Giorgione, and of works of Carracci and Tintoretto. The Drawing Room, which has a charming interior, has priceless treasures upon its walls. Here are examples of Vandyck, Cornelius Jansen, Van der Velde, Greuze, Reynolds, Romney, and Lawrence. A gem of the collection is Romney's full-length portrait of Mrs. Banks, the wife of Henry Banks, the politician, which is one of that artist's most successful pictures. Reynolds is represented by a portrait

We shall leave our pictures to tell further the story of the beauties of the interior of Kingston Lacy. The glory of the stairway will be divined from the picture of the upper gallery, with its splendid balustrade, its Grecian candelabra, its statuary, and great picture by Schneiders. The rich adornments of the Spanish Room, its panelled and elaborated ceiling, its cornice, frieze, and leather-work, and its wonderful pictures, are well represented. The stately dignity of the Saloon, its works of celebrated artists, the tasteful character of the Drawing Room, with its glorious Romney, and the ordered dignity of the Library, will all suggest to our readers the grandeur, splendour, and multitudinous beauties of this stately Dorsetshire mansion.

IN THE GARDEN.

THE FRAGRANCE OF SPRING.

WITH the earliest sun-warmth beaming on opening flowers in April and when the wind is out of the north and east, one becomes every year more sensible of the delight of the fresh sweet smells of the earth and quick-growing vegetation. In a garden that adjoins woodland that is on poor sandy soil this is all the more noticeable,



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THE SALOON.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

of the same lady's mother. We have said enough to show how truly splendid is the great collection at Kingston Lacy, and there are examples of many other artists of various schools.

Sir Joshua Reynolds visited the house with Dr. Johnson, and made curious notes upon the paintings he saw there, saying: "I never had fully appreciated Sir Peter Lely till I had seen these portraits." The portraits he referred to were those of three lovely daughters of the house of Banks. A curious record exists of the visit of Dr. Johnson to the house. He appears to have been rather bored with the pictures, strange as that may seem, when we remember that Reynolds was his companion, and he retired to a corner of the room, where his curious gestures attracted the attention of his host. He appears to have extended himself in a chair so as to occupy a good deal of the floor space, whereupon Mr. Banks courteously assured him that, though the house was not new, the flooring was perfectly safe, upon which the doctor started from his reverie "like a person wakened out of his sleep, but spake not a word."

because of the fragrance of some of the unfolding leaves—of Birch and Larch and Whortleberry—a mysterious scent, recalling the dainty pungency of Lily of the Valley and the wholesome balsam of dying Strawberry leaf. But many gardens have not the advantage of the near neighbourhood of scented woodland, and their owners will do well to think what sweet things they can provide and plant, bearing in mind how pleasant it is to have the sweet scents near the house, so that they will be wafted into rooms through open windows. For this there will be Wallflowers in plenty. For our southern counties there is the neat wall shrub Azara microphylla, generous of the Vanilla scent of its small greenish yellow bloom, soon to be followed by Daphne pontica, whose fragrance carries far and wide. The young leaves of Sweet Briar are one of the best sweets of April, and Magnolia stellata, a sheet of white bloom at the same date, fills the air with a faint perfume. If Primrose or Cowslip banks and borders are near a house, their neighbourhood will make itself pleasantly perceptible. The flowers and foliage named are only a small number among the early things of sweet scent, but they are those that give it off most liberally, and are therefore the ones most precious for planting near our dwellings. Late in the year the plants that are among the best for giving off sweetness are Mignonette and the annual night-scented

Stock (*Matthiola bicornis*), the latter kept by less important path edges, for the plant has no beauty in daytime, though it is well to have a little of it half-hidden among other things in the best borders, and especially under sitting-room windows. It would be delightful to have a whole border of night-flowering scented things for the enjoyment of summer evenings, and to plant it with *Nicotiana glauca* (the sweet-scented Tobacco), *Oenothera lamarckiana*, and this sweet little *Matthiola*. So few plants give off sweet scents in winter that this excellent quality in some of the *Cistuses* should not be overlooked. *C. laurifolius* and *C. cyrius*, in any moist days of winter when the wind is out of the cold quarters, give off powerful whiffs of their delicious incense-like smell, adding much to the interest of the garden at the time when there are scarcely any flowers.

BUNCH PRIMROSES.

When the bunch Primroses open wide to the sun-warmth spring is pouring its flower-gifts generously into border and woodland, but the Primrose is queen of the garden. There is a strength and beauty in the bunch sorts that makes them of much value in spring, when we seek to have fragrance and colour everywhere; but it is a reasonable question to ask, What is a bunch Primrose? The answer is, a mingling of the true Primrose and the Polyanthus. We might describe them as Oxlips in orange, white, yellow, and other colourings. Mr. Anthony Waterer of Knapkill, Woking, raised a very beautiful series of reds and crimsons, and Miss Jekyll has devoted her thoughts to getting delicately-shaded flowers, which in the half-shade of the Primrose garden at Munstead have a charm and refinement entirely wanting in the strongly-coloured-centred flowers that nurserymen seem proud of. In "Wood and Garden," page 217, the following allusions are made to this race: "Their time of flowering is much later than that of the true, or single-stalked, Primrose. They come into bloom early in April, . . . and they are at their best in the last two weeks of April and the first days of May. When the bloom wanes, and is nearly overtopped by the leaves, the time has come that I find best for dividing and replanting. . . . A certain number will not have made

more than one strong crown, and a few single-crown plants have not flowered; these, of course, do not divide. During the flowering time I keep a good look-out for those that I judge to be the most beautiful and desirable, and keep them for seed. These are also taken up, but kept apart, the flower-stems reduced to one or two of the most promising, and they are then planted in a separate place—some cool nursery corner. I find that the lifting and replanting in no way checks the growth or well-being of the seed-pods. . . . It is well in heavy soils to sow when ripe, and in light ones to wait till March. The seed is sown in boxes in cold frames, and pricked out again into boxes when large enough to handle. The seedlings are planted out in June, and are just right for blooming next spring."

IVY-TRIMMING.

April is a good month to trim Ivy. We mention this because a correspondent asks the question, "When may this be done?" and it is a usual request at this time of year, when our thoughts turn to the garden and its preparation for summer. There is only one way of dealing with ragged Ivy, and that is to clip it back until not a leaf remains, removing at the same time any refuse that may have accumulated between the stems. Within a few weeks the fresh foliage opens out and covers the surface of stem and shoot with a fresh and delightful greenness, as restful to the eye as a breadth of verdant lawn. It is at this season, when the sun-warmth quickens vegetation and reacts upon humanity, that a general excess of energy is displayed in tidying the garden, and the climbers are among the first things attacked. It is well that this is so. Climbers kept within reasonable bounds have a marked beauty, but when allowed to clamber over everything, even to peeping in the upper room windows, the whole house wears an air of raggedness and neglect which may be removed by the shears and knife. Writing of Ivy reminds one of the neglect of the finer varieties—*amurensis*, for example, which covers a wall in the grand gardens at Hatfield. The Ivy is so useful an evergreen that it is worth while having a few of the finer varieties, not omitting the bush sorts, which make mounds of foliage throughout the year.

A SPORTSMAN'S LIBRARY.

FROM the average Briton's point of view there are few more desirable possessions of a literary character than a comprehensive sporting library. Surrounded by works dealing with sport in its many phases, a frost-bound huntsman or even a flooded-out golfer can view the prospect of enforced leisure with comparative complacency. To trace the history of sporting literature from the publication



A SPORTING TITLE-PAGE.



A "NIMROD" TITLE-PAGE.

in 1486 of Dame Juliana Berner's famous work, the first to be penned by a woman in the English language, could have no other effect than to provide the reader with a catalogue. In the present instance, therefore, only those books are referred to that have shown an extraordinary aggrandisement in value in the course of the past few years.

Mention of the Prioress of Sopewell Nunnery recalls the fact

that in 1902, at the sale of the Fountaine Library, the second edition of the famous "Treatyse pertheynyng to Hawkyng, Huntynge and Fysshynge with an Angle," printed by Wynkyn de Worde in 1496, fell to a bid of £120, a sum very much below the amount that the first and exceedingly rare edition printed at St. Albans would fetch nowadays, although the latter does not contain Dame Berner's hints respecting angling.

Other works of mediæval sport that have also enjoyed the attention of the frequenters of Sotheby's and Christie's of late

a discourse of Rivers and Fishponds, and Fish and Fishing"—the third, fourth, and fifth editions were sold in one lot for £800, or just £395 more than the copy of the first edition alone, in a contemporary binding of black morocco, realised last summer.

Although the name of Charles James Apperley does not appear upon the title-pages of many volumes, in all probability no author of sporting works has been more widely read than the old Rugby boy whose publisher, with rare appreciation of his pen, kept a stud of hunters for his use, defrayed all the expenses of his tours, and, in addition, gave him a handsome salary. Apperley, as a matter of fact, until he attained the age of about forty-four devoted himself practically to fox-hunting, but in or about 1821 he began to contribute, under the pseudonym of "Nimrod," a series of articles to the *Sporting Magazine* that doubled the circulation of that monthly within two years.

To-day a complete set of the *Sporting Magazine* is greatly coveted by connoisseurs of sporting literature, who were afforded a chance of acquiring the same when the Blyth sale was on in 1901. The complete set from 1792 to 1870 on this occasion fetched, it may be mentioned, £315, a very satisfactory price, seemingly, judging from the fact that the summer of 1903 saw the 156 volumes knocked down by Messrs. Puttick and Simpson for £150, and, in 1902, by the same firm for £260.

This monthly, by the way, has several rivals, so far as the latter-day collector is concerned, and of these perhaps the most prominent is the set of thirteen volumes, published from 1822 to

1828, that bear the title of *Annals of Sporting and Fancy Gazette*. This periodical, either in whole sets or in separate volumes, has been in the market somewhat frequently of late. In 1896, for instance, ten volumes containing many engravings, some of which were the work of T. Landseer, who became an Associate of the Royal Academy, and who was elder brother of Sir Edwin Landseer, fetched £15 5s., while on the occasion of the sale of a



A NIGHT SCENE WITH SIR THOMAS MOSTYN.

came from the pen of the poet Turberville about 1575. When, in 1898, the final portion of the Ashburnham Library was being disposed of, the epigrammatist's "Booke of Faulconrie or Hawking," printed in black letter, and "The Noble Arte of Venerie or Hunting," with a silver figure of a deer on the binding, respectively fetched £50 and £51; but on the occasion of the Blyth sale these two volumes, bound in one, fell for the modest sum of £15 10s. The difference in price is accounted for by the fact that the Ashburnham copies were dated 1575 and the Blyth copy 1611.

There is a book of ancient date without a copy of which, in its later editions, no sporting library can be considered complete, and this, it is perhaps unnecessary to state, is "The Complete Angler, or the Contemplative Man's Recreation: being a discourse of Fish and Fishing, not unworthy the perusal of most Anglers." Concerning Walton's famous work volumes have been written, and all its idiosyncrasies, including that golden misprint on page 245 of the first impression, "contention" for "contentment," have been duly noted. Apart from its value as a literary classic, this volume, the authorship of which in the premier edition was scarcely disclosed by the abbreviated signature "Iz. Wa.," has many features of interest, including the music, on pages 216-217, to the "Anglers' Song," one page of which is printed in the ordinary manner, while the other is turned upside down, presumably to permit of two singers, treble and bass, standing opposite each other and reading from the same book. To do justice to the fluctuations in the price of this little volume, dated 1653 and measuring 5½ in. by 3½ in., even since it was catalogued in 1816 at the modest sum of £4 4s., one would require the aid of a diagram with a thick black line soaring heavenwards to indicate its rise in value. In the absence of such an auxiliary, however, it may be mentioned that about 1889 a copy of the premier edition sold for £180; two years later (in March, 1891) another and a good copy changed hands for £310; while on December 3rd, 1896, a perfect copy, bound in the original sheepskin, realised £415, or £1 13s. 4d. a page. That the Ashburnham Library was rich in "Compleat Anglers" goes without saying; indeed, on the occasion of the sale in the spring of 1898, the first, the 1655 and much enlarged second—"being



IN COVERT.

portion of the library of Sir Daniel Cooper, Bart., of Warren Tower, Newmarket, no less than £167 was attained. When the *Annals of Sporting* was a current publication, it is to be feared that the sales were scarcely as satisfactory as at present; at all events, the June number for 1828, which is now so rare, and which was included in the Cooper set, was the last to be issued under the original proprietorship, and the implication is that very few copies of this number were purchased by the public, who thereby missed a most circumstantial account of the appearance of a mermaid at Llanllwchaearn near Aberystwyth, and a detailed

description of George IV.'s resplendent fishing outfit, which was "richly carved with royal emblematical devices."

Other serial publications of the early nineteenth century that are eagerly sought after include the *Sportsman*, a periodical of the nature of the better-known *Sporting Magazine*, a complete set of which, from 1833 to 1845, realised £46 at the Blyth sale, the *Sporting Review* and "The Book of Sports." The *Sporting Review* was published by Ackerman in 1839, and opens with an address by the editor, "Craven," who takes the opportunity of refusing with thanks a work on fly-fishing in 700 folios. At the Blyth sale this publication fetched £29 8s., while a very similar production, "The Book of Sports," illustrated by Cooper, R.A., and E. Landseer, R.A., realised £15 15s. a few years ago.

To return to Apperley and his works, undoubtedly the most popular book that bears the name of "Nimrod" on its title-page is that entitled "Memoirs of John Mytton, Esq., of Halston, Shropshire," a work that has for its first edition attained bids of £17, £14 (Blyth sale), and, in 1902, £36 for the first three editions, the second of



"HE IS AMONG THE DEAD!"

Britain"), with its descriptive letterpress given in both French and English, that has a great vogue at the present date. For this apotheosis of bull and bear baiting, prize and cock fighting there has been considerable competition, that culminated, at the sale of Sir W. A. Fraser's library a few years ago, in the imperial folio realising £225—the result doubtless of the breaking-up of many copies, for the purpose of framing and glazing, in the early days of its popularity.

Although it is impossible to more than mention the titles of many works, such as "The Roadster's Album," the 1845 edition of which fetched £48 in 1902, "Lillywhite's Cricket Scores and Biographies," which owes its scarcity to the fact that the publisher, annoyed at its slow sale, destroyed most of the copies, other favourite sporting books demand more than passing mention. What sporting library, for instance, could be said to be complete without a copy of Surtees' immortal "Jorrocks' Jaunts and Jollities," illustrated by H. Alken, a work whose second edition has fetched from £25 10s. to £31 within the last few years? Other works rarely excepted from the sporting library, but of a very different character to the now

classic Badminton Library, of which large paper editions have attained extraordinary sums of late ("Hunting," for example,



"FULL CRY."

which is valued at £11 11s. The illustration "Light Come, Light Go," recalls one of the most remarkable experiences enjoyed by Mytton—it merely provoked his mirth. When falling asleep in his barouche, whilst counting banknotes, he lost several thousand pounds through an equinoctial gale blowing the paper money through the open window, and distributing what, to many people, would have been a handsome fortune over the Doncaster Road.

Another of Apperley's works that is eagerly sought after is the story of Francis, second son of Andrew Raby and Lady Charlotte Raby, a work that appeared under the title of "The Life of a Sportsman," and which, although presumably fiction, is described by its author as partly true and partly fictitious. At the Blyth sale a copy of this book fetched £27 10s., but in the summer of 1903 a copy was sold by auction for £21.

In addition to "The Sporting Repository," one of the rarest of Alken's illustrated works, which was sold for £54 (in 1901) and £80 a year later, there is the same author and artists' "British Sports" (called on the second title-page "The National Sports of Great



"LIGHT COME, LIGHT GO."

sold for £29 in 1838), are Pierce Egan's "Life in London" (£48 in 1902), its sequel (£59), and D. Carey's kindred volume, "Life in Paris" (£39).

The sportsman's library will doubtless include works on natural history (at the sale of Sir Thomas Lucas's library Gould's "Birds of Australia," with the supplement, in eight volumes, fetched £128), agriculture, etc.; but the volumes in which the enthusiast will find compensation for a day's sport lost will ever be those works illustrated by Alken and his contemporaries and written by "Nimrod," and those who followed in his footsteps; and for this reason alone the works that are coveted for the sportsman's library will in all probability be ever exempt from a literary slump.

HAROLD MACFARLANE.

ON THE MEALS.

EVEN the shore-gunners of the North Norfolk coast are not indifferent to a continuous chilling rain, and it was, no doubt, one of these hardy haunters of the wind-swept sand-hills and lonesome flats who built for himself the cramped little shelter into which I fled when the great dun clouds came looming up, leadening the waters of the salt creeks, but whitening the surf along the shore. The prehistoric pit-dwellings on the neighbouring heaths and hills were at one time more weather-proof than this little low, turf-roofed lean-to against a marsh-bordering bank; but for all that its shelter was welcome. Seated on the wooden bench, which was all it could boast in the way of furniture, I could watch through the open doorway the restless wildfowl of the marshes and the gulls, which gleamed like large snowflakes against the background of sombre sky.

To many men who have grown accustomed to their desolate lonesomeness the wide-spreading meal marshes of North Norfolk have a strange fascination. In wandering among these marshes one seems to be in a primeval borderland, where a new earth is coming into existence, but is not yet ready to be inhabited by man. For months and sometimes years together terrestrial conditions obtain here, and as a result primitive forms of vegetation have established themselves on the ooze-covered, hardened sand; but now and again, when a strong and continuous north-west wind has swelled the North Sea tides, the waves have burst through the sand-hill barriers and won back for a while the area they have lost. Under ordinary circumstances, however, the flood tide is only marked by the filling of innumerable winding creeks and drains, where an abundant mollusca is found, together with myriads of active little shore-crabs. Along the margins of these creeks and drains, which are draped with wind-and-sun-crimped sea lettuce, and festooned with olive green bladder wrack, gulls of various species feed side by side with the grey-backed hooded crows, curlews and red-shanks probe the slippery ooze, and herons from the colony at Holkham capture eels and flounders. Spanning the drains, here and there, to make the marshes traversable to gunners, wildfowl netters, and cockle gatherers are roughly constructed wooden footbridges, to cross which is no easy matter after one has been tramping over the clinging ooze. These form slightly elevated vantage points from which one can observe the wild life of the marshes, and revel in the wonderful wealth of colouring—the olive green, purple, crimson, grey-green, and gold—revealed all over the meals at dawn and sunset.

The flora of the meals, however, is not remarkable for brilliancy of hue, except when autumn has tinted it with the transient beauty of decay. Dainty sea pinks bloom on some of the turf spots which are rarely submerged; but by the sides of the salt creeks the dingy purple sea aster is a more conspicuous flower. Even more characteristic of the meals are the fragrant grey-green sea southernwood, the rare shrubby sea blite with its succulent leaves, the frosty-looking sea purslane, and that primeval plant the marsh samphire, which grows amid the marine and estuarine flotsam, and on muddy tracts strewn with the blue and white fragments of innumerable shells. Large tracts there are, too, covered with the sea lavender, which, though



Being a Discourse of FISH and FISHING, Not unworthy the perusal of most Anglers.

Simon Peter said, I go a fishing: and they said, We also will go with thee. John 21.3.

London, Printed by T. Moxey for RICH. MARRIOT, in
S. Dunstons Church-yard Fleetstreet, 1653.

FATHER ISAAC'S TITLE-PAGE.

snow buntings were very numerous, knots were in great abundance, and several green and purple sandpipers were met with. Rareties obtained or seen were a blue-throat, a rock pipit, some shore larks, several ruffs and curlew-sandpipers, a little stint, a Temminck's stint, a turnstone, and a grey phalarope. Several flocks of sanderlings, dunlins, ringed plovers, and golden plovers were observed. Teal were plentiful, widgeon, wild duck, and sheldrake were occasionally seen, also small parties of scoters. Among the sea-birds noticed were several species of gull, razor-bills, a red-throated diver, Arctic and black terns, shearwaters, and a skua (species not determined).

An examination of the British bird lists also conveys some idea of the ornithological richness of this part of the Norfolk coast, for the lists show that the barred warbler was first identified as a British species from an example obtained in this neighbourhood, and that Pallas's barred warbler was also first obtained here. The yellow-browed warbler and the aquatic warbler have also occurred in the district, while other local rarities are black storks, ibises, and Steller's ducks.

But the chief ornithological feature of the meals is the presence, during the winter months, of large flocks of pink-footed geese. The oldest inhabitant of the neighbouring uplands cannot remember a year when these fine birds failed to put in an appearance. They generally arrive about the last week in October, but the time varies a little, according to the weather, and last year several hundred of them were seen before the middle of that month. While crouching in the gunner's little turf-roofed hut, I heard the loud "honking" of these geese, and presently, on looking out, I saw at least 200 of them approaching from landward, flying in V-shaped lines, each line consisting of from thirty to sixty birds. They passed over the hut on their way to the sand-banks lying off the coast, and as they passed—moving apparently slowly, but probably faster than their wing-beats suggested—I had a good opportunity of observing their outstretched necks, heavy bodies, and widespread tail feathers. They were flying high, and maintained an equal height until they were immediately over the sand-banks, when they dropped suddenly, like dark flakes, out of sight behind the sand-hills. It was about eleven o'clock in the morning when I saw them flying out to the sand-banks, and the gunners of the neighbourhood state that they usually fly seaward at the ebbing of the tide, so Mr. Seebohm is in error when he states that they only go out to the sand-banks after nightfall. As the lands they frequent when the sand-banks are submerged chiefly belong to the Earl of Leicester, these flocks of geese are usually undisturbed, though a bird is occasionally shot by one of the shore-gunners. It is on record, however, that on January 13th and 26th, 1881,

not brilliant of hue, displays so many bluish lilac blossoms as to constitute the predominant colouring wherever it grows.

The bird life of the meals has for many years attracted gunners by its character and abundance, and ornithologists by its variety. There was a time when, owing to there being no close season, the native bird life sadly decreased in numbers, and more than one breeding species seemed likely to meet with the fate of the avocet, which, through persecution, ceased to nest at Salthouse about the year 1818. Better times, however, have been experienced by the birds of late years. The colonies of common and lesser terns have been taken under the protecting care of the county naturalists' society, which has appointed a watcher to prevent nest-raiding, and the oystercatchers and ringed plovers, there is reason to believe, have benefited with the "sea swallows." During the period of the autumnal migration, the shores and meals are often visited by large numbers of migrants, chiefly wading birds, which linger a while to feed along the beach and by the creek sides. Something of the nature of this autumnal invasion may be gathered from the notes of two naturalists who made four collecting trips to the district, in September and December of one year, and August and September of another. Peregrine falcons were seen on two occasions, a buzzard once, and merlins several times. Four or five short-eared owls were encountered,

Lord Leicester and the Hon. Colonel Coke, while out with shoulder-guns, killed between them seventy-six wild geese here, a feat which, "Thormanby" says, "I suppose it would be impossible to achieve anywhere else in England, except at Berkeley Castle."

BREAKING AND TRAINING HORSES.

THE methods of horse-breaking, and there are several, are much less important than the manner. What you teach a horse, or attempt to teach him, is of much less consequence than that you should have untiring patience and sympathy with your pupil. There are many ways of breaking horses to saddle and harness, but, after all, the result depends on the man who uses them. A horse has an intelligence, though a very limited one, and this fact alone is a trial to the patience. The man's mind travels so much faster than the horse's that it is often difficult to realise how very slow are his mental processes. You have by constant repetition to induce a horse to do what you want. Once having learned it, he will never forget his lesson, except under the influence of a sudden panic, and not always even then. With the patience must be combined sympathy. It is a very common thing for ignorant men to imagine that because a horse is sulky, or ill-tempered, he is so exactly in the same way that they are. It is much easier for a highly-educated mind to sympathise with and enter into the limitations of animal intelligence than it is for an ignorant or stupid person to do so. The latter is dimly conscious that his own ignorance or stupidity is partly wilful, and he imagines the horse's to be so also. Thus we have many horses spoiled because breakers and grooms will inflict punishment, probably at one time deserved, so long after the offence that the horse has not the faintest chance of connecting the punishment with anything he has done. Of course, horses vary in temper and disposition very much; and although we are sure that most horses can be taught anything by a man who will exercise patience and temper, yet there is not the faintest doubt that some horses are naturally more prone to evil than others. We knew a colt—a well-bred, well-shaped Irish hunter—which, if an evil deed was left unpunished, would always repeat it, and was never forgetful of anything approaching to successful rebellion. Thus, on one occasion his rider was trotting along

without whip or spurs. The horse pulled up sharply, wheeled round, and refused to budge; coaxing, backing, turning round and round were all tried. The rider at length dismounted, cut a switch out of the hedge, and remounted. The horse went a few yards and then stopped short. Down came the switch, and he went on at once. It was, however, months before he forgot that temporary victory and ceased to stop short and wheel round at most unexpected moments. Mr. Barton's book, "Breaking and Training Horses" (Everett and Co., Limited), has some sound advice on the important topic of the due admixture of persuasion and force. The latter should only be tried when the former fails. The breaker should always have in his mind that, if there is to be a battle, he must win, and, therefore, like a wise general, try to choose his own time and ground for it. There are points in Mr. Barton's book with which we do not agree; for example, he recommends pulling over a rearing horse backwards. This is an old idea, and we had thought an exploded one. It is dangerous for the horse, and (as we have tried it) quite ineffectual as a cure for the vice in question.

The author covers a great deal of ground in a small space, and it would be unreasonable to expect him to say everything on a large subject; but so far as he goes we think his advice is sound and reliable, and a really good breaker, bearing in mind general principles, such as can be learned from this book, should use his own sense in their application, which must vary according to the disposition of the horse whose education he has taken in hand.

In one matter, however, the book is defective. The training of the polo pony requires either more or less of system than is laid down here. More, because a polo pony's training can hardly be too complete if the trainer is competent (such a man should have the somewhat rare combination of fine horsemanship with skill at the game); or less, because if the trainer has the former qualification and not the latter—and this may well happen for lack of opportunity—then his best plan is to make the pony a thoroughly well-trained hack, handy and temperate. He will be wise to confine himself to figures of eight, and eschew bending courses. These are very pretty at shows, but they are the worst possible training for a polo pony. The bending course teaches nothing that cannot be taught equally well in a riding school, without the danger of upsetting a pony's temper, and spoiling his mouth. For a polo pony the best preparation is thorough schooling in an enclosed riding school, and steady hacking work outside. But after making all deductions, we have found Mr. Barton's little book handy, instructive, and useful.

COTE HOUSE, OXON.

TO say that the south-western corner of Oxfordshire, space for space, surpasses any other part of England in the number of its beautiful houses which are memorials of days gone by, would be presumptuous; to say that it excels in this respect any other English district known to a tolerably industrious seeker after the antique, to wit, myself, is honest, even though it may be ignorant. Yet surely the small area which can boast of Yarnton, Cassington, Eynsham, Stanton Harcourt, Witney, Yelford, Bampton (with Ham Court), Minster Lovell, Cote, and Burford—the list is by no means exhaustive—can hardly be equalled. Indeed, Burford alone, being a place in which seventeenth century buildings are hardly considered old, and an eighteenth century structure almost seems a modern outrage, contains as many treasures of antiquity as half-a-dozen other towns, all reckoned to be old, taken together. In fact, there is no district known to me in which the easy-going antiquarian may spend a few summer days with so much of interest and profit, and I count myself fortunate so to have spent some of our last so-called summer.

Cote, in this corner of historic Oxfordshire, is not exceptional, but in itself it is a treasure. It stands two miles east of Bampton-in-the-Bush, to which there was once no road but a track across the common, in the little village of Bampton Aston, and it was built, early in the seventeenth century, when James I. was the first King of Great Britain. The builder was not of an Oxfordshire family, being one Thomas Horde, whose father



H. W. Taunt.

THE OLD GATEWAY.

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was Allan Horde of Horde Park, in Shropshire, and history does not record in any chapter known to me the manner of the life of the Hordes during the period of two centuries for which they lived at Cote. They may have been Cavaliers or Roundheads, given to nasal psalm-singing, or hot-headed gallants who trolled Lillibullero, they may have frequented Capp's Lodge for cock-fighting, or have seen men

hanged on the gibbet tree between Shipton and Burlford. But one thing, at any rate, is certain with regard to the first of the Oxfordshire Hordes; he was a builder on the grand scale. Cote is distinctly imposing now, and the dwarf tower at the south-west end is a feature by no means common in Jacobean houses. But it must have been far finer, and the general effect must have been distinctly more commanding, when the tower was 20ft. higher than it is now. The first of the Oxfordshire Hordes, indeed, seems to have perceived that the times to come might be full of troubles; and well he might, for a year or two before he began to lay one stone on another the Gunpowder Plot was discovered; and while he was building the Commons began to show the first signs of that independent spirit which culminated in the Great Rebellion. These were indeed anxious times, and he who raised a great house did well to remember that it might be called upon to stand a siege. Such, at any rate, was the view of Thomas Horde, for, not content with a tower rising 20ft. above the present elevation, which would command a wide prospect, he also surrounded his house with a moat, now vanished. He, or his successor, at any rate, had an anxious time in the forties of the seventeenth century, for when Charles held his Court at Oxford, and visited Burlford often, and Newbridge was an important strategic point, Cote was in the thick of things, and the Hordes could hardly keep aloof. If they were for the Parliament, as the presence of one of the oldest of Baptist chapels in their vicinity might seem to suggest, their lines were not therefore cast in the more pleasant places early in the war.

Still, through good or evil fortune, they were able at any rate to cling to the house which Thomas Horde built, and to some wealth; and those exquisite gates, bearing little or no sign of use



H. W. Taunt.

THE CARRIAGE DRIVE.

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in the present day, are the evidence of the fact. That artistic work in wrought and hammered iron, which would tell us much if but a few more of those letters of its inscription remained, still

carries the date of its erection (1704) plainly for all eyes to see. It is, indeed, a magnificent example of the iron-work of the period, and it was never done cheaply. Moreover, so much as remains of the interior woodwork, the wainscoting in the hall, and the remains of the dais, show no less than the proportions of the house, and the aisle containing their tombs in Bampton Church, that the Hordes were a family of consideration in the land. In their case, as in that of many another ancient family, the end appeared to have



H. W. Taunt.

FROM THE LAWN.

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come when Miss Horde, unmarried, and believing herself, no doubt, to be the last of her race, gave Cote to the Reverend H. Hippisley of Lambourne Place in Berkshire. Thither in due

course this clergyman's successor caused much of that which made Cote most distinguished to be removed. Thither, for example, went the painted coats of arms from the windows and the grand staircase. This is not the only case in which Oxfordshire's loss has been Berkshire's gain. Indeed, early in the last century Captain Hippisley, the actual remover, had before him a precedent in the action of the Earl of Abingdon, who pulled down what was left of Rycote, the palatial mansion built by Lord Williams of Thame, and "enriched his house at Wytham with the spoil." So Captain Hippisley was but acting in harmony with the spirit of his generation in committing what cannot but be regarded as an act of vandalism. At least he left the gates and the wainscoting, and the old house now in the occupation of the family of Gillett is a noble example of Jacobean taste in architecture. And, after all, it turns out that there are Hordes, or a family who believe that they are of the old stock, in



H. W. Taunt.

A VIEW SHOWING THE TOWER.

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America, and that, curiously enough, is how these pictures came to be taken. That is to say, the good Mr. Taunt of Oxford, who has a nice taste in matters antiquarian, originally took these pictures and photographs and rubbings of the tombs in Bampton



H. W. Taunt.

THE STAIRWAY.

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Church, for a Mr. Hord of Cleveland, Ohio, who may, as likely as not, really be of the race of Hordes of Cote, and of Horde Park, Salop, although he has dropped the final "e." This, surely, is an interesting little fact, even though it be personal. CYGNUS.

CONFIDENTIAL.

MY DEAR SUSAN,—It may not seem so curious to you as it did to me that the same hand which delivered your letter brought up at the same time the card of Sir Francis Budge, with the information that "the gentleman is in the library, my lady." You have the world's knowledge of the great physiologist, but you don't know a little something else which helped to make his arrival the chiming coincidence it happened to be. I'll tell you, my dear, what that little secret something is; but as the avowal might expose us (I mean Sir Francis and myself) to groundless speculations, I will preface it with a copy of the writing on his card. The tender message runs thus: "Please invite me to lunch, and allow me to see the caudate frog which I understand your nephew has sent to you from some obscure creek on the river Amazon."

To come all the way from Manchester Square to Newbury to view such a trifle (it hardly strikes the eye as a tail at all) may seem in itself suspicious, but yet I feel more at ease now in disclosing that Sir Francis was the last man I refused . . . or that ever offered. But he gave me a heart-ache the moment after I had said "No," and you would never guess why. It was when he said "Lady Catherine, I am deeply sorry, but am so unfortunate that I am not surprised." Now, he was a well-looking man, not at all badly off, and talked about even then; which is ages ago. "So unfortunate," he said, "that, at thirty-seven, I do verily believe no woman ever thought of me as I hoped you might." Glancing at him as he spoke, something told me that the poor man was not mistaken. It is all very well, Susan, but 'tis so with some of them just as with us; only they seldom know and we always do. Well, no more was said but the simplest good-bye; and though we have very rarely met since then, I have never lost the feeling of being in confidential relations with Sir Francis Budge.

So there is an end of that story.

The gentleman in the library was told of the pleasure it would be to me to see him at luncheon—in twenty minutes; and that meanwhile the frog should be brought to him.

And then, my dear niece, I read your letter. Of course I guessed—not unsympathetically, you understand—that it would be all about those engrossing young people your two great girls. Well, they are mine, too. And though you have female friends and acquaintances who would say to you, I don't doubt, "Why trouble about them? Depend on it their old aunt will keep her word and leave all that she has to your daughters," I am of another generation and do not agree with these ladies. There will be enough to live on; enough, perhaps, for chiffons of every reasonable description; but though my only regret on account of Sir F. Budge and the rest is for their own sakes, I don't think you *can* be too anxious to see your daughters comfortably married.

You see how consistent I am. As you must remember, I said the same thing long ago, when you awoke to the alarming certainty that your girls, like so many others, were daughters of the beanstalk. The figures are graven on my memory. Peggy, five feet seven at fourteen years and six months; Laura, five feet nine and a-half on her seventeenth birthday; and what three years more were to do for them I beheld the other day when the little one—Peggy, I mean—stood in the doorway of my room like a splendid picture in a frame much too small.

Yes, I know that at first I made light of your misgivings in talking about those two young giantesses, big as if from designs by Frederick the Great, blooming as the frontispiece of Mr. Sutton's list of new roses, and—(but ah! my dear Susan, that at any rate might have been prevented)—both entitled by rights to put M.A. after their names. But though I would have laughed away your forebodings when they were first confided, there was never a time when I did not share them. Married or single, there are few of us without a fair working knowledge of the heart of man; and even my imperfect intuitions warned me that you were right, and that these fine new physical and intellectual developments of our sex would have no good effect on the blessed institution of marriage. While scientific men like Sir Francis Budge were trying to account for these sudden developments, we poor mothers and aunts had to look for consequences; and, as you say, we soon had reason to fear that beauty might be too magnificent and even too scholastically cultured. Not, of course, too magnificent for admiration, and of course not for respect; but there is the unfortunate consideration that when these feelings rise to a certain height they are apt to remove modest men, as well as others whose foible is not modesty, to a distance. And, besides, we knew already that for some reasons that are good, and some that are bad, and some that are worse, being *mean*; marriage had come to be looked upon by many young men of this generation as "much too steep." I use the charming expression of your cousin, Johnny Boldero, in excuse to me of his abominable trifling with that pretty creature at M.

And in truth, my dear, marriage *had* become more formidable—we well know why—without this mistake of turning our gentle Lauras and Peggys into the gigantesque and Amazonian. I told Sir Francis, when he confessed at luncheon that, scientifically, he couldn't quite make it out, that in my opinion Nature had been misled by Darwin; the idea being that our young women would be more attractive to wedlock if physically more majestic and mentally more Minervan. And a good idea, too; but that it could not succeed unless a corresponding advance in brains and stature renovated the young man's *amour propre*, or unless (but how much there is in this unless!)—unless he could muster a little more enterprise. Why, my dear Susan, Laura in her best clothes must be a terrifying though a lovely spectacle to many men from the mere superficial area of her attire. At her age neither you nor I would have looked half so expensive in the same array; nor in my young time was it impossible to be satisfied with a ten-guinea gown.

And now, if what your crying pen tells me is true, matters have suddenly, unexpectedly, atrociously worsened for all the poor mothers and aunts of all these young giantesses. Yes, I have myself read in the newspapers, and have even heard from my cousin Emily Whitstable, who has three girls all longer than herself to marry, that a new taste has come in and is expected to make a very pronounced appearance. Very tall young ladies had, at any rate, a *succès d'estime*; now they are to lose even that, it seems. Goddesses are "going out." Juno is to be replaced on the shelf. Diana—who really should consider whether this is a propitious time for exchanging her side-saddle for the other kind—must be content in future with her old supremacy out of the drawing-room. The *petite* (by which, I suppose, anything under five feet eight is meant), the soft, the round, the truly feminine of the dear old Queen's dancing days, is to be "the woman of 1904." So you hear, so my cousin Whitstable hears, and I have just quoted the words of one real authority—the great dressmaker, Mr. Blackthorn.

My dear, I believe it! You ask me whether I think it possible that fashion can make arbitrary changes of this character. I don't know what to say to "arbitrary." It is the right word for the change of fashion in dress, no doubt; for unless there were a deal of arbitrariness somewhere, submission to all the freakish

modes imposed on us would be impossible. But this is another affair and much more mysterious. It was by no arbitrary arrangement, in your meaning, that so many of Britain's children became daughters of Anak, nor will the practice of athletics, etc., explain it; for it is now seen, as Sir Francis admits, that many girls in all classes of society are following the example of our girls, without any marked change of conditions to account for it. And how was it that not many years ago, when a certain charming actress was at her zenith, you encountered the Ellen Terry chin in every tenth young woman you met? And of course you remember when most social gatherings were embellished by one or two unquestionable originals by Burne-Jones. Well, do you see many Ellen Terry chins now? You do not. Do you meet any considerable number of the *petite*, the soft, the gentle, low-voiced, truly feminine? No. *But you will!* Without pretending that the mystery can be read, I am sure it will work. As of course you know, I have not spent a season in town these five years—such is my ancientry, and such my desire to pass my second childhood where my first began. But I mean to come at the end of this season, expecting even as soon as that to discern in the looks and manners, yea, in the measure-

ments of the young ladies of to-day, some reversion to the time when I was a girl.

This is not a comforting answer to your letter, dear Susan, but you won't think it unsympathetic. I could cry, I could scold at the thought of what this Darwin-and-Dame-Nature conspiracy has done for hundreds and hundreds of respectable families, and especially for that one of which, after all, your two girls are the most splendid flowers. There is something in that, Susan, you will admit. But it is hard. It is hard that the Old Woman should return before the New Woman has had time to fine herself down a bit to the requirements of that immitigable egoist, Man. It is there the mischief lies. I do think, however, that we have to blame ourselves a little, as hinted in the first part of this terrible long letter. For one thing, I think that too much of what Johnny Boldero calls "chumminess" has been permitted in the social intercourse of young men and young women, meaning that it has no good effect upon the former, though of course they like it at the time. I am not sure, however, that I have not said that before. It is, at any rate, a rather graceless way of ending this epistle.

Your devoted AUNT CATHERINE.

THE BAR POINT-TO-POINT MEETING.



W. A. Rouch.

BAR LIGHT-WEIGHTS JUMPING.

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AT the end of each hunting season we have a series of miniature steeplechase meetings, and last week was very full of these. Perhaps the one that attracted the greatest amount of public interest was the Bar Point-to-Point, held on Lord Ebury's estate, midway between Norwood and Rickmansworth. The course was laid over a capital line of country, all grass with the exception of one field of plough. It cannot be

said that the fences were natural, but they were such as to test the jumping powers of the competitors, and the pace being very fast, several mishaps occurred. The weather was all that could be desired, and the success of the tenth meeting of the famous Pegasus Club must have been very encouraging to the members and their friends.

The Bar Heavy-Weight Race for the challenge cup presented



W. A. Rouch.

THE FINISH FOR THE BAR LIGHT-WEIGHT RACE.

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W. A. Rouch.

PARADE FOR THE INNS OF COURT OPEN RACE.

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by Mr. Yerburch was the first event on the card, and the sympathies of many were with the grand old sportsman Mr. W. F. Phillpots, mounted on the former winner Cromaboo, but, unfortunately, they came to grief, and were placed third to Mr. Meyrick Beebee's Knock Out and Mr. F. H. Boucher's Maxim.

The Bar Light-Weight Race was a very close thing, being won by Mr. Lauriston Batten's Warbler by two-thirds of a length, Mr. C. D. Pen- nant's Yardley Chase and Mr. Rupert S. Gwynne's Paudeen being second and third. Mr. B. B. Sapwell's Glen- rake ran away from his field in the Inns of Court Open Race, a length separating his two immediate followers, Mr. R. E. Morris's Sir Theo and Mr. W. Astor's Royal President. Mr. Astor, however, easily secured the next

event, a Plate for Maidens, with Lax II., beating all his opponents by six lengths. The last race was for a cup presented by the Pegasus Club, to be competed for by the subscribers of the O.B.H. and farmers, and Mr. A. Hodgson's The Jobber won with ease.

ON THE GREEN.

THERE comes a time in one's life when one takes a keen personal pleasure in recording and reading the successes of those who are comparatively veterans at golf, and the successful veteran has been much

in evidence at the recent Eastertide competitions. Mr. Laidlay and Mr. Maxwell tied for the medal of the Honourable Company of Edinburgh Golfers at Muirfield, and though Mr. Maxwell, the younger man, won with great ease in the playing off, still he is no longer to be reckoned quite among the rising generation. We all know that he has arrived. He was so out of health at Pau that it is peculiarly satisfactory to find him playing a game which shows him to be himself again. At Sandwich, Mr. Mure Ferguson won the medal on the first day with a score that was no less than five strokes better than anyone else could do, showing

that the young men still have something to learn; and on the second day of the meeting Mr. Arnold Blyth scored quite a triumph for what it would be perhaps impolite to call the old school (may it, without offence, be styled the middle-aged school?) in winning with the very fine round of 75. This is the best score at which a Sandwich medal has been won for a



W. A. Rouch.

MR. LAURISTON BATTEN ON WARBLER.

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W. A. Rouch.

INNS OF COURT OPEN RACE.

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long while, and I am not sure that it is not the best ever returned there by an amateur in any competition. In the amateur championship Mr. Blyth has always been rather unlucky in not doing himself full justice, but he is, perhaps, stronger at Sandwich than anywhere else, and if he keeps his game up to the form which this score indicates, he will be bad to beat when the battle is set in array, on his favourite green, for this year's championship of the amateurs.

The editor of a golfing contemporary, in concern for the accuracy of the information of his paper, comments on the doubts I expressed whether any Americans would appear at the amateur championship. He affirms confidently, on the strength of a recent letter from Mr. Travis himself, that that eminent golfer of the States is coming. So that is all right; and we shall be very glad to see him, to beat him if we can, and to accept a beating, if that is *kismet*, with as good a grace as possible. This paper first gave out that Mr. Travis was coming for the amateur championship—that is the concern of the paper with my own unworthy doubts. Mr. Byers, it appears, will not be there.

Another good green of the right kind, that is to say sand-hilly and sand-

bunkery in its hazards, and with seaside grass for its turf, will be ready for play soon. This is the new course at Littlestone, to be played on by the club that calls itself the Romney Sands Golf Club. But it is to be understood that it is not all sand—otherwise a spade and a bucket, rather than golf clubs, would seem to be the things to play with. Very possibly a better game—but not the same game! The course is being, or has been, laid out and watched in its infancy by James Paxton, son of Peter, and he has brought it to such a state of perfection that members expect to play on it on May 1st. "The greens are large and undulating, and there are some grand sand-hills which make formidable hazards. As a test of golf, this Romney Sands Golf Course should in a short time be equal to any on the East Coast." Please note the quotation marks. I have not seen the course, but I have not the least reason to doubt that the quotation marks include the truth and nothing but the truth. That the whole truth should be thus briefly included would be more than could be hoped or wished. Doubtless there is much more to say—but that is for another time. For the present, any enquirer should address himself to the secretary, Mr. A. W. Cook, 74, Cheapside, E.C.

HORACE HUTCHINSON.

LORD WINCHESTER'S JERSEYS.

WOODY Hampshire is more generally associated in the popular mind with mutton than with milk, owing to

its having developed the excellent breed of sheep which bears the name of the county; yet at some of its charming and picturesque seats the Jersey breed of cattle has found favour, and among the herds that at Amport St. Mary's, recently formed by the Marquess of Winchester, takes a very high place. The soil on the estate at Amport has proved to be thoroughly well suited to this class of cattle. It is a red loam on a chalk subsoil, and is situated about 300ft. above the level of the sea. If there were nothing else to show that the soil is fairly rich, it would be proved by the fine trees in the gently undulating park. They would not grow unless there was a fair depth of soil above the chalk. Lord Winchester's idea has been that to breed the best you must buy the best, and the foundation of the herd was carried out with great judgment. For many years before he began Jersey cattle had been kept on the estate, but it was not till 1901 that a first-class herd was established. At that time some of the choicest specimens were selected from the best herds in the kingdom. For example, at



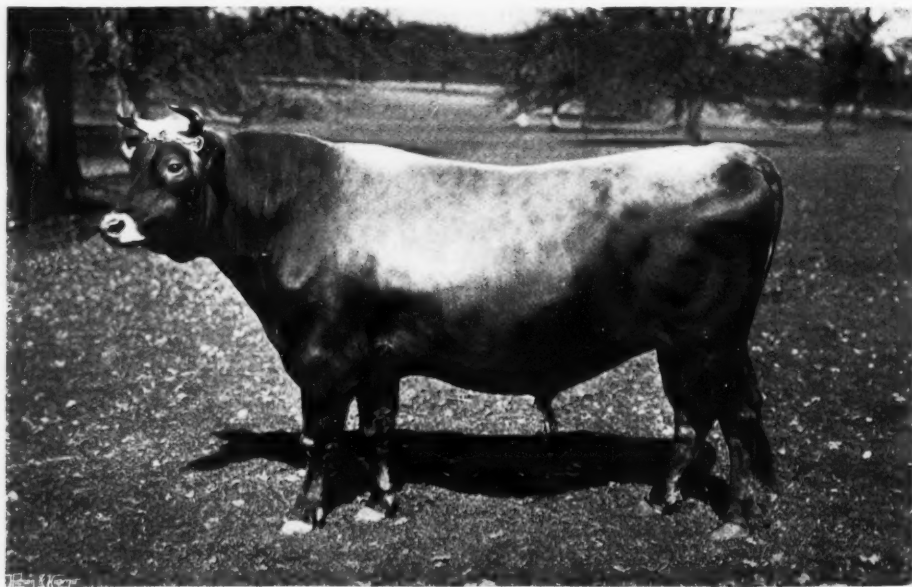
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"COUNTRY LIFE."

excellent sires. Good Friday, 6878, was bred by that famous Jersey man Mr. W. McKenzie Bradley, from the champion cow Beresford Pride, winner of eight first and two champion prizes, by Lord Charles Beresford, a noted bull bred by Mr. Pope from the celebrated champion cow Lady Dawish,

which was awarded ten first and three champion prizes. Good Friday possesses all the most essential characteristics of a successful sire—capital outline, well-placed and fine shoulders, great depth behind the shoulders, well-sprung ribs, and a skin soft to the touch. But Companion, 7461, of which we give an illustration, is, to our mind, even a superior animal. He has already won six first prizes, and they include a first at the Royal Counties Show last year. He was bred by Mr. J. le Lievre, St. Saviour's, and is by Mr. Perree's famous bull Forfarshire, 5207, second prize in Jersey in 1901, and afterwards exported to Mr. T. S. Cooper, Pennsylvania. With a foundation so good and solid it was to be expected that the herd would do well in the shows, and the successes achieved more than bear out that inference, as well as do the utmost credit to the selection, breeding, and management bestowed upon the herd. In 1902 twenty-three first, three second, and four third prizes, besides a champion prize and the Blythewood Bowl, were won, whilst in 1903 the same number of premier honours were



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COMPANION.

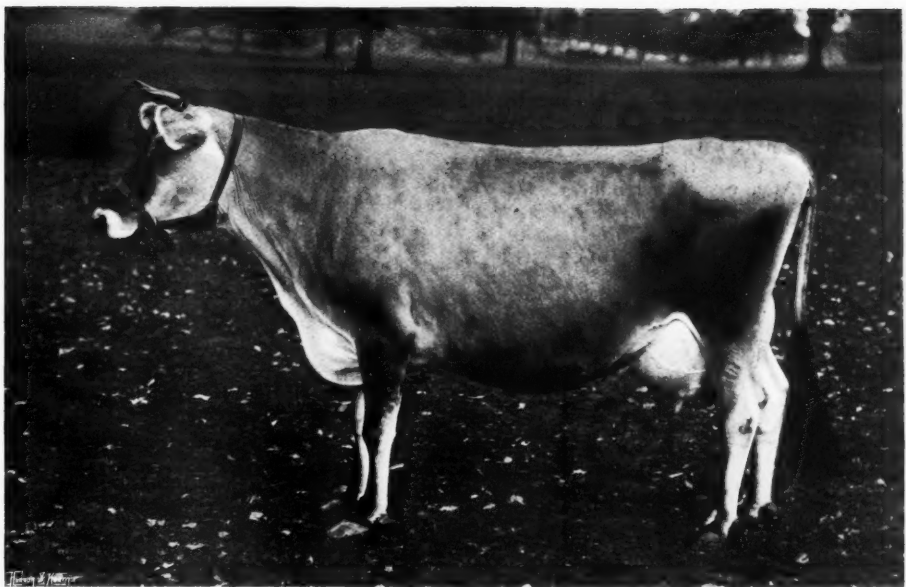
"COUNTRY LIFE."

the Blenheim sale in 1901 there were purchased such beautiful cows as Lady Belle and Charley's Bride. Of the latter we once actually gave a picture as that of what a typical Jersey should be. Among other additions was Lady Rotha, bought at the Aston Clinton sale in 1902. These cows were mated with

taken as in the preceding year, with twelve seconds, and eight thirds, in addition to two champion prizes, two reserves for champion, two Blythewood Bowls, one group prize, the Wadhurst Hall fifty-guinea Challenge Bowl and the reserve for it as well. Nor were the successes confined

to the inspection classes, but that excellent cow Printemps won the bronze medal at the Royal Counties Show at Southampton, and others of the herd obtained certificates of merit in butter tests at such shows as the Bath and West and Tring. We need scarcely say that in a herd of this rank the milk record is kept with the most assiduous care. During the full twelve months up to and preceding March 21st, the cows, twenty-one in number, yielded 14,900 gallons of milk—only 430 gallons short of two gallons a day per cow throughout the year.

The milk is not sold, and indeed it would scarcely be a profitable business selling Jersey milk unless a special price were obtained for it. The object kept in view at the dairy is the production of the best possible butter. The machinery of the dairy is driven by electricity. It includes an Alpha Laval Separator. The buildings are very plain and simple, the objects aimed at in them being before all else cleanliness and efficiency. In fact, the comfort and well-being of all the animals is thoroughly provided for, a fact which will be apparent from the illustrations which we show. Some of the totals achieved by individual animals are very surprising



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CHARLEY'S BRIDE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

Lord Winchester has applied to his Jerseys also. His animals are not merely pampered-up creatures intended to take the eye at a livestock exhibition—they are the very animals that would be desirable to any man about to start a first-class dairy. Lord Winchester has not only encouraged the practical side of exhibitions, namely, the milking trials and butter tests which were started some years ago, but subjects his cows to the test of their usefulness in an actual dairy. At present our farmers find it more profitable to sell milk than to make butter, but owners like Lord Winchester are helping them to find out that butter-making is an industry not to be despised. No doubt it is very hard for those tenant-farmers who have to pay fairly high rents, heavy labour bills, and other charges to have to compete with less heavily handicapped foreigners, but, on the other hand, there is no place more suited than England is for the sale of an article of extra quality. If farmers were only able to produce the very best kind of Jersey butter, they would have no difficulty in obtaining more for it than the public is willing to pay for the uniform factory-made butter imported from abroad. That this can be of the first quality is simply impossible, because in order to

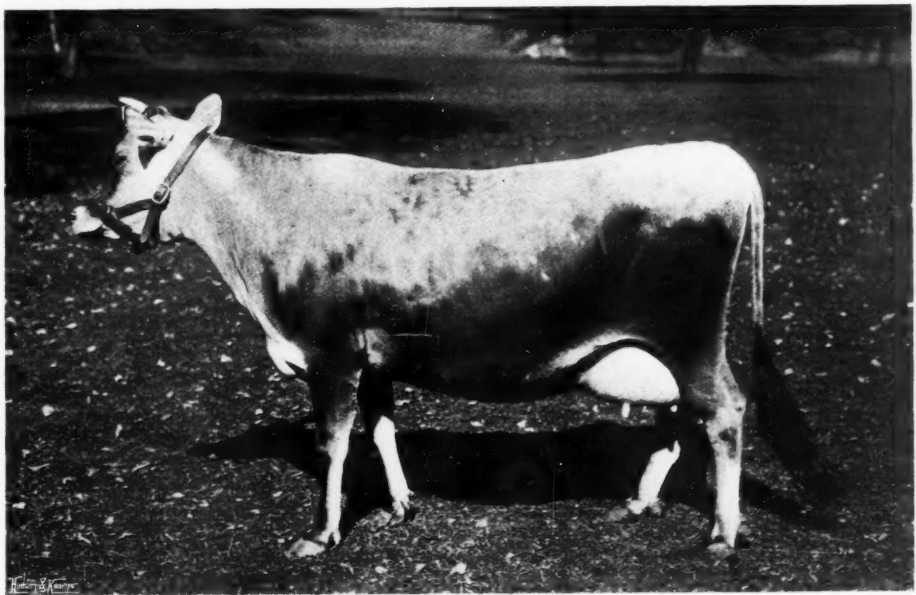


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PRINTEMPS LEADING, ASTON 10th, FOLLOWING. "COUNTRY LIFE."

indeed. Aston 10th was in milk 343 days in 1903, and gave no less than 8,224½lb. of milk. Printemps was 298 days in milk, and gave 7,716½lb. of milk. Charley's Bride was in milk all but one day of the year, and gave 6,833lb. of milk. Lady Belle was 266 days in milk, and gave 5,500lb. of milk. Such records as these bear eloquent testimony to the milking capacity of this fine and promising herd of Jersey cattle.

Lord Winchester, as our readers need scarcely be told, does not confine his attention to Jersey cattle, but is a lover of the very best stock of all kinds. In Shire horses, for instance, he has bought wisely and well during the last few years, only he does not keep Shires for the purpose of exhibition, but for the hard work for which Nature seems to have designed them. It is, however, a very great pleasure to see those noble draught horses at work on the estate, and in this Lord Winchester shows a good example. After all, the rearing of Shires ought not to be chiefly for the sake of exhibition, but rather that a heavy and substantial draught horse should be developed to do the haulage necessary both in town and country. This principle



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LADY ROTH.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

obtain the much-vaunted uniformity the makers of it have to mix their very best quality of butter with that which is inferior. No one who is acquainted with the subject would for a moment think of denying that the best butter in the world can be produced from Jersey cows fed on the finest English pasture. At a very small number of places in Great Britain can such butter be obtained, but where it does exist there are plenty of customers to esteem it at its true value.

HUNTING & POLO NOTES.

MOST people who know anything about stag-hunting in the West, know it as it is in the autumn. When I first remember the chase of the wild red deer there was a very short season; now these hounds hunt for a longer period than any others. The month of July has not closed ere the horn is heard, and, in some form or another, the chase goes on merrily until May. In the first or second week of April there is a short season for stag-hunting, and it is very often a good one. The red deer is a sad robber of crops, and a dainty and destructive feeder in the autumn. He grows fat on the plunder of the fields, and retribution comes when some morning the tufters rouse him from his couch. Then, in the hot, dry weather, he finds it hard work to keep away from his pursuers—the big foxhounds that are always kept in first-rate condition. A stag used, I think, to have more law given him than is the case now. It is, indeed, much more necessary to kill him than it was. In the spring, however, the stags are lean and wiry. They have had less food, and harder work to obtain it. Consequently, the light spring stags often give long gallops. Everyone knows the Devon and Somerset hounds, but of late years there have been other auxiliary packs established. Of these, one of the most successful is the Quantock. Mr. Fenwick Bisset, the restorer of stag-hunting in the West, may be said to have created the sport in the Quantocks, where his house of Bagborough was. Stags and hinds captured



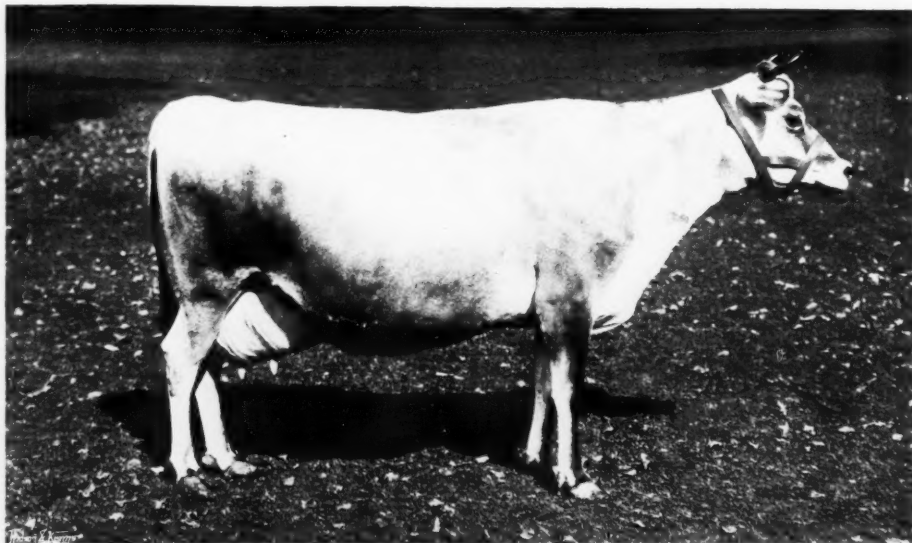
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TO THE DAIRY.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

unhurt on Exmoor were sent to the Quantocks. But when the red deer spread and flourished, and there was room for another pack, Mr. Stanley formed the present pack, which he hunts himself. Slowley Wood belongs to the Devon and Somerset, but the Quantock hounds are often invited to draw it. It is

a lovely spring day, and the woods are already rich with the promise of coming spring, and the air is full of the sounds of the birds, the woodpeckers eagerly chattering, a jay in blue and chestnut flashes across the road. I see a single magpie, and hope it does not mean that I shall lose hounds, or suffer other ill-luck. The first swallows of the season are swooping round, and the unceasing sound of many waters, which is characteristic of Exmoor and the West, rings in my ears. Wherever you go in this country you hear the murmur and ripple of streams. I suppose it is the force of association, but fox-hunting in spring



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LADY BELLE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

seems out of place, while stag-hunting is so purely a sylvan sport that it fits in with bright weather. Minehead indulges in a little spring season, chiefly because it is a comfortable place to stay in, and if you do not ride or drive you can bicycle, an amusement which yields rather a fearful joy elsewhere in Devon and Somerset. By the time I have reached Slowley Wood the tufters are already at work, and someone tells me that the keeper has harboured a stag. There was a whistle, and in a few minutes one found one's self one of quite a large field waiting for the pack; nor had we very long to wait. Hounds when laid on hunted well but a little doubtfully, as though scent was not altogether of the best. Perhaps, too, they cannot forget that for months past they have been stopped from stag and cheered on to hinds. However, I do not think the scent was very good, and we found ourselves clattering over Croydon Hill, a lofty ridge which seems to have been scattered over with loose paving-stones. The Master minds neither stones nor holes, but just rides up to his hounds. I am not sure that I have ever seen anyone ride so resolutely to the pack in a rough country as Mr. Stanley, and the hounds respond, as hounds will, by coming to him and working for him well. The Wych Wood which the hounds entered is on the edge



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TWO OF LORD WINCHESTER'S JERSEYS.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

of the beautiful Timberscombe Valley, and just above the Dunster and Dulverton road. Stags may go down to the waters of the Avill, and thus refreshed scramble up the steep sides of the Grabhist, and so away to the sea by Selworthy and Bossington. In the wood there was a pause; probably the stag had couched, as they will. Hounds, I think, ran right up to him, and the sudden burst of melody told of a fresh find, and the stag ran back. Hounds still hunted carefully after the first rush was over and the excitement had subsided, but now we were emerging from the hills, and found ourselves in the rich valley, the scent improved immensely, and hounds ran fast and hard as they pressed their stag towards the sea, with Dunster Castle on the left, and there on the sands he turned to bay, until the flowing tide enabled a boat to capture him just before four o'clock. It was a capital run, and quite as good as anything I saw in the autumn.

Twice last week, too, Mr. Heinemann brought his otter-hounds to hunt the waters round Minehead, Dunster, and Alcombe. These streams have not been drawn for five years. There were two otters marked on the last day that hounds were out. Unluckily, however, when hounds marked a third time we dug out some young cubs, too young to leave the nest. One escaped into the stream, where I fear it must inevitably have been drowned. Young otters have to learn to swim and to shift for themselves in the water. A young otter is as helpless in the water as a puppy or kitten of the same age. The otters were taken away to be reared. Our otter-hunt—or rather the search for the material for an otter-hunt—took us over some of the same ground as the stag-hunt, and not far from a place where it is said that vulpicide and cervicide have lately been perpetrated. When we consider what a valuable thing hunting is to the West Country places, and how the whole neighbourhood profits, it seems strange that such things should be. Still, I suppose that if the Belvoir can have a fox shot in front of them other Hunts must expect their share of trouble. I hear that Lord Ancaster has discharged the man who did the deed in the Belvoir country; and it is to be hoped that this incident may show owners of shooting how little their injunctions are obeyed. Probably this was by no means the only fox that had been shot. No doubt the man was, as is the custom of some (not all) keepers at this time of year, on the look-out to shoot the vixen, intending, perhaps, to bring up the cubs by hand. It is satisfactory to note that Mr. Gerald Hardy has had such hearty support from the Meynell Hunt. The pack have killed forty brace of foxes, which is an excellent record, and shows that Gosden has not forgotten how to hunt a fox.

The polo season has actually begun. They allow no gaps between hunting and polo in Warwickshire, and the first tournament of the season has been played at Leamington. I am glad to note that the Crystal Palace ground will be fully occupied this season. The London Polo Club

occupies an unique position among our clubs, and lays itself out to cater for the needs of Colonial and Indian visitors. The system of keeping a stud of ponies for hire has worked well. The International Challenge Cup will be played on the London Polo Club's ground on June 14th, 16th, and 18th. Polo players in London might arrange a team and be mounted by the club. Thus the London Polo Club gives us the chance of seeing any polo notabilities who may be in London and have not their ponies with them. Matches are also arranged against teams from Hurlingham, Ranelagh, Eden Park, the Coldstream Guards, and the Royal Artillery. I have also the annual circular that Ranelagh sends out to its members. There is one thing that the management of the Ranelagh Club deserve greater credit for than they have received. Of the large income of the club, which is financially one of the very strongest in London, the greater part is spent on the members. Although the club is, in a sense, a proprietary one, yet no members' club spends as much on its members. I happen to know the new polo ground well, and while it will be of the greatest benefit to the players, yet it must have been a most troublesome and expensive piece of work. I am glad, too, for the sake of polo as well as the general interests of the club to note that Sir Edward Ward has joined the general committee, while the addition of Major Vaughan, 7th Hussars, and Captain J. L. Wood, 18th Hussars, two of the best of our soldier players, will strengthen the polo committee. Mr. Gill will still be at the club to handicap and arrange teams in the manner he is so notably skilful at, and Captain L. C. D. Jenner (late K.R.R.), the new joint polo manager, is one of a family of polo players who are not only skilful at the game, but are widely popular both in and out of the Service. The manners of a polo manager, be it noted, are very important to his club. Although it has nothing to do with polo, I am glad to note that Lord Dufferin and Ava, in becoming captain of the golf, still continues the connection with Ranelagh which his brother, the much-regretted Lord Ava, so well begun. The club has over 2,000 members, and is still one of the largest polo clubs in the world. It is with some expectation that I note the prominence given to coming polo in its programme. The soldiers have given us our best players, and will continue to do so. Before my readers have this number of COUNTRY LIFE in their hands I trust that if the weather is propitious the first game of the polo season of 1904 will have been played on the new ground at Ranelagh.

The 15th Hussars have won the Indian Inter-Regimental Cup after a tremendous struggle with the 9th Lancers. At the close of time the scores were even, but after the goals had been widened, in accordance with the Indian rule, Captain Courage hit the winning stroke. Mrs. Henry, the wife of the general, presented this much-coveted trophy to the winners. X.

CORRESPONDENCE.

A CURLEW'S NEST.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I enclose a photograph, taken by Mr. Robert Ballantine, which you may possibly care to reproduce. It was taken last year, and I think it will interest many of your readers, because it is exceptional in various ways. To begin with, it is seldom that a curlew lays four eggs, and again, that two of the birds should be so much further advanced than their brethren. Possibly two birds may have laid in the same nest, but considering the solitary habits of the curlew this seems scarcely likely. Another thing which strikes me is the attitude of the young chicks. They are evidently attempting to conceal themselves. Even the youngest bird, which is apparently only just hatched, is trying his very best to get his head under cover. Is it not strange that reason or instinct, as the case may be, should be so strong at such an early period?—S. C.

PLOVERS' EGGS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In your issue of April 9th, Emma Elizabeth Cope writes criticising, unfairly I think, a note which appeared in your "From the Farms" column. Miss Cope says plovers' eggs "are sold in their shells, and no one with any acquaintance with oology would mistake the peculiar shape of a plover's egg." This is obviously quite true, but Miss Cope is scarcely justified in assuming that the buyers of these delicacies possess a very deep knowledge of oology, and I can positively state that I saw on several occasions last season rooks' eggs exposed for sale and labelled plovers' eggs. Further, although plovers' eggs are sold, as Miss Cope says, in their shells, they are very frequently served to the consumer without that means of identification, and as to the "most decided flavour" claimed for plovers' eggs, I doubt very much if one man out of ten could tell the difference between a rook's and a plover's egg, however acute his sense of taste may be, especially if it is served with all sorts of dressing, as is not infrequently the case. The "peculiar clear bluish 'white'" is common to the eggs of plovers, rooks, and several other kinds of wild birds, and is in no way to be considered a guide to their identification. In the case of gulls' eggs the resemblance is so great that the caterer for a restaurant or hotel, or even the *chef* of a private individual, may be pardoned if lack of ornithological knowledge leads him astray. This is taking for granted the absolute honesty of such individuals, which appears to me rather a large assumption. But, after all, Miss Cope begs the whole question raised by your contributor, which appears to me to be the desirability of using for consumption the eggs of those birds which, if not decidedly mischievous, at least in no way benefit mankind, rather than those of the



beautiful plover, which feeds entirely on the insect enemies of the farmer and horticulturist. Miss Cope also assumes that, when a pair of plovers are deprived of their first clutch of eggs, they simply look out for a new and more secure site and begin domestic operations all over again; even if this be the case, does it not seem to point to the fact that, if left to rear their first brood in peace, they might possibly be induced to bring up a second?—F. B.

A WHITE-HEADED BLACKBIRD.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I was much interested in Mr. Macnaghten's letter, which appeared in a recent issue of COUNTRY LIFE, referring to a blackbird with a perfectly white head and neck. Curiously enough, a white-headed blackbird, exactly answering to this description, has been visiting our lawn almost every day during the past few months.—EDWIN BLYDE, Nether House, Rammoor, Sheffield.

BATS IN A CHURCH.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—With reference to the letter of your Buddhist correspondent in your issue of March 19th, I think he would easily understand the objection to bats in a church, and would not be quite so hard upon the objectors, their squeamishness, and want of Buddhism, if he saw the results of bats' presence in the church in our village. Not only are books and varnished surfaces spoilt, but after the church has been cleaned and left in order at night, the altar and its surroundings have frequently to be cleaned again before the early morning service, and bats are sometimes found clinging to the altar frontal. I think, also, that any woman or girl may be excused for a little feeling of squeamishness if, when seated at organ or harmonium, hands and attention occupied, she feels a bat whirling above her head, and remembers the tales she has heard of bats clinging to people's heads and getting entangled in their hair. I do not know whether Buddhism would make one lenient to the twitterings and strange sounds which afford much interest to the school children and amusement to the choir, but they are certainly not conducive to reverence, which, after all, is of more importance, this being a Christian church and not a Buddhist temple.—F. F.

THE ICE HARVEST.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—These photographs represent the gathering of the ice harvest, which is an important part of the winter work on a ranch in Colorado. In one of the pictures the ice-plough is seen at work cutting into the ice. The other shows the ice-shoot, by means of which the huge blocks of cut ice are raised from the water to the waggons on which they are sent away to the market or to the store.—L. B.

A SAFE NESTING-BOX.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—If any of your readers happen to live, as I do, in a cat-infested neighbourhood, I can suggest a safe nesting-place for robins, etc. A flower-pot (fastened on a piece of wood) with a hole broken out of the side, and put up on a wall about 8ft. high, will be immediately seized upon by robins, wrens, titmice, etc. I had two broods of robins safely brought off from one pot last year, and a pair are now building in the same pot. I find it is best to scald the pot well after the young ones have left the nest, to destroy all vermin, etc.—THOMAS WOODCOCK.

MONGOLIAN PARTRIDGES IN THE LONDON MARKET.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Some years ago Mr. Tegetmeier called attention to the interesting fact that he had found in the London market some examples of the Far Eastern variety of partridge (*perdix barbatus*), the range of which lies east of the Altai Mountains. It was supposed that they had found their way to London among frozen game sent through Russia from Northern Central Asia. Apparently the Siberian Railway, in spite of the passage of the armed battalions to the Far East, has plenty of room on the return journey for local productions, for I found several of these Far Eastern partridges in a game



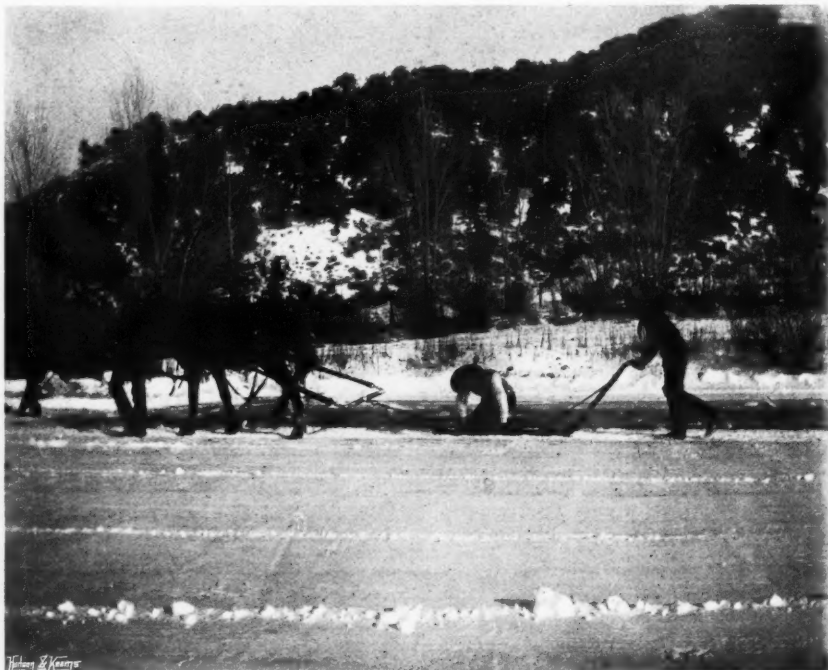
LOADING A CART WITH BLOCKS OF ICE

shop at the end of last week. They had the light buff breast and black horseshoe which cannot be mistaken. After making a purchase, I enquired whether there were many in the market, and was told that 700 or 800 were on sale that morning at Leadenhall. If the Siberian Railway can bring us these partridges, and the frozen carcasses of the fine Prince of Wales's pheasant, it is to be hoped that when the war is over it may be possible to obtain by the same rapid route the eggs of the Mongolian pheasant, which everybody wants and nobody can get.—C. J. CORNISH.

A TAME WOODPECKER.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have often been advised to write to you about my pet woodpecker, and I am now going to venture to do so, for I should much like to know if any of your readers or correspondents have ever succeeded in rearing one. Last summer I was staying in the neighbourhood of Barnard Castle, at a shooting lodge, and one evening a keeper told me that he had seen "a new bird," or, at any rate, one he had never seen before. I asked him to describe it, but only the most gorgeous tropical bird could have answered to such a



THE ICE PLOUGH.

description! I then suggested going with him to the wood where he had been working, but as it was some two miles away, the bird had gone to bed when we arrived and all was quiet. The man showed me a hole in a birch tree in which he said the bird lived. At 8.30 the next morning we went again, and this time with better luck, as for some minutes before we arrived at the tree we could hear a loud chirping. Crawling very gently through the underwood, we caught a glimpse of the bird with his head out of the hole. After a good deal of trouble we succeeded, by the aid of some matches and striking the trunk of the tree, in frightening the bird till he flew out of the hole, when the keeper threw his cap on him, though really he was too young to fly, being quite bare under his wings, and the tail not grown. I was sure he was a woodpecker, but did not know what kind. The keeper, however, refused to believe me. A day or two later I was able to convince him, as I bought a book on birds, and fortunately found a coloured print exactly like my woodpecker, and which informed me was the "Great Spotted." The bird had a most voracious appetite, and knowing he ought to have various kinds of insects, I went about armed with a hat-pin and removed pieces of bark from trees and palings, and impaled all the horrors I could find, but in spite of all my care he did not thrive; I also gave him bread and milk and fruit. In about a week's time he became so weak he could hardly stand, his eyes were shut, and he looked as if he would be dead in a few minutes; so, as a last resource, I poured a teaspoonful of olive oil down his throat, and in less than two hours he was perfectly well, and eating as heartily as ever. For at least two months he seemed to have no idea of feeding himself, but ate from an egg-spoon, chirping all the time, and I used to get up about 5.30 every morning to give him his first meal. I found him on July 21st, so now he is over eight months old. I have a very large cage for him, in which are some large logs of wood, which I have frequently to renew, as he picks them to pieces. It is impossible to imagine anything tamer; he will sit on my arm for hours when I am out for a walk, and when tired or alarmed runs into my pocket, either in my skirt or coat, and if neither is available, into the pouch in my blouse. He follows me up and down stairs, and plays with a piece of string like a kitten. He eats anything and everything, being very fond of tea, which he takes from a teaspoon, and licks the spoon quite clean with his tongue. He is also devoted to nuts and fruit, especially grapes, though, if fresh fruit is not available, he does not despise raisins or dried currants. A Brazil nut is also a great pleasure to him.

The bird is now in beautiful plumage, and most happy and contented unless I go out without him. He has travelled to Newcastle, Manchester, London, Isle of Wight, and heaps of places in my pocket, though I always have the cage in the railway compartment, so that he can have some food. He is a most entertaining little creature and has all sorts of antics, especially when he thinks no one is watching him. I should so much like to know if anyone else has a tame woodpecker, as everyone refuses to believe me until they have seen him,—BLANCHE TAYLOR.